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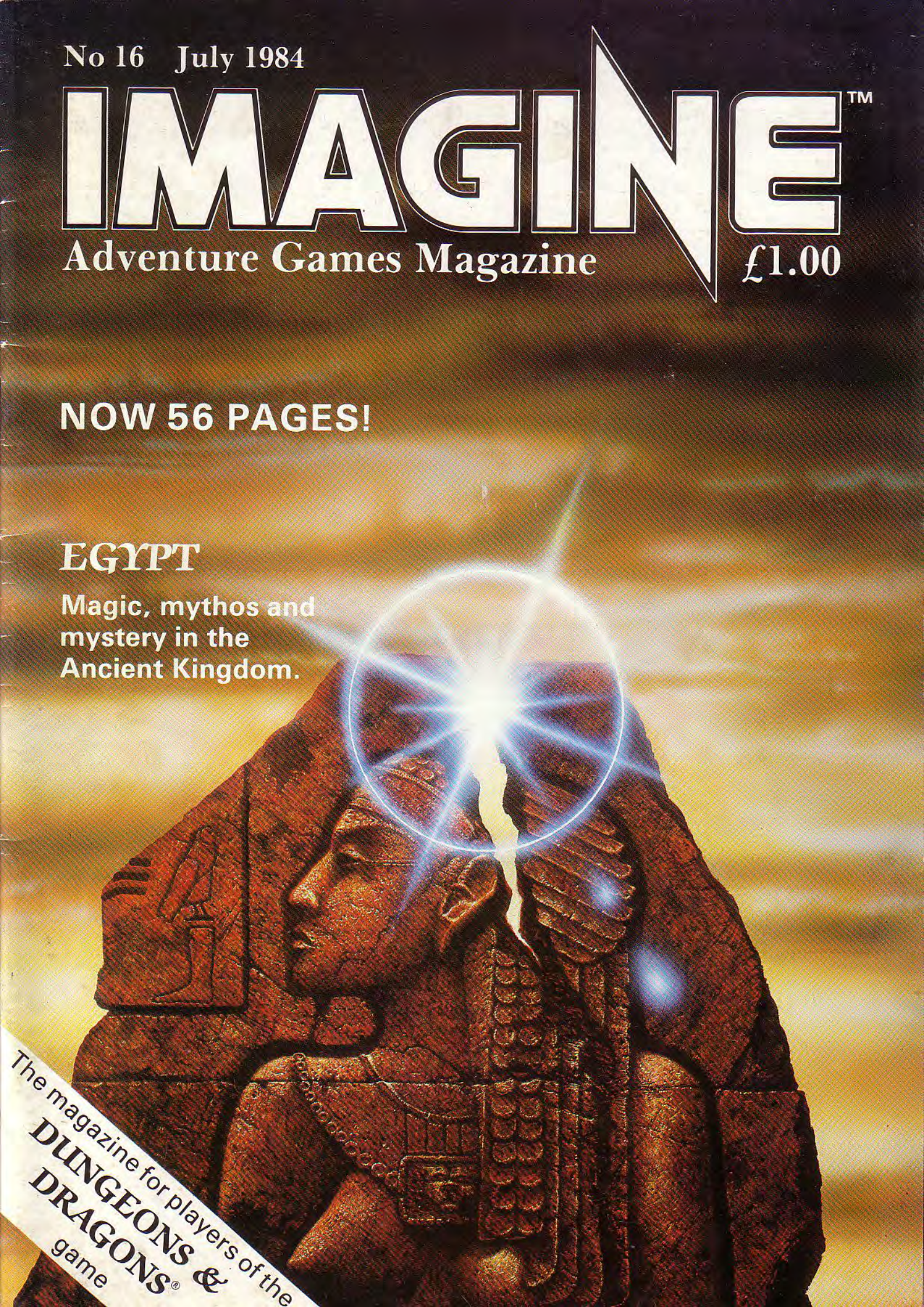

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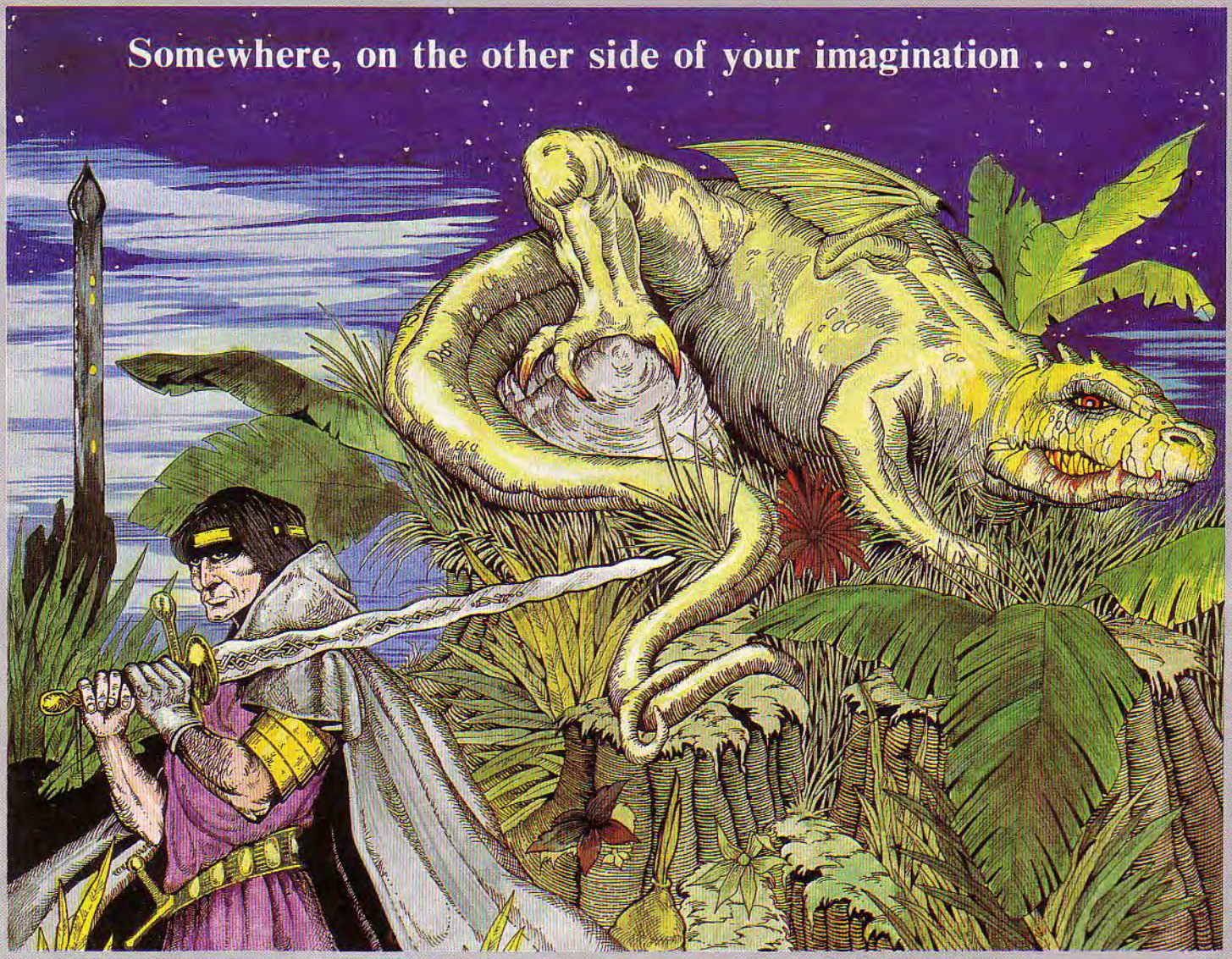

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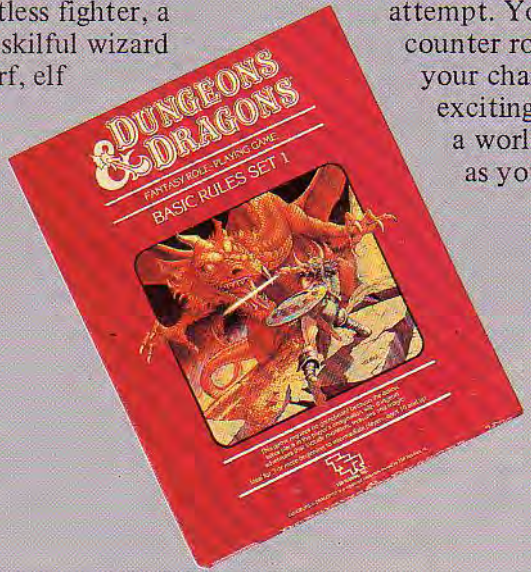

TSR UK Ltd
The Mill
Rathmore Road
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Telephone: Cambridge (0223) 212517

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Publisher ..... **Don Turnbull**
Editor ..... Keith Thomson
Assistant Editor ..... Paul Cockburn
Editorial Assistant ..... Kim Daniel
Features Assistant ..... Michael Brunton
Art ..... Phil Kaye
News ..... Doug Cowie

This month's contributing artists:
Paul Ruiz, Pete Young, Ian Gibbs, Rebecca, Brian Williams, Tim Sell, Jeremy Goodwin, Ian Williamson

Cover: Circle of Ra, by Tony Roberts

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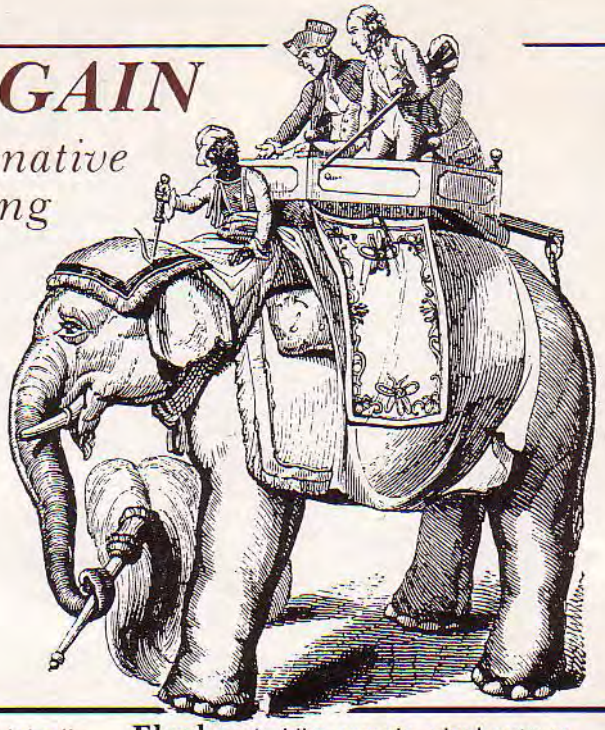
THERE AND BACK AGAIN

Chris Felton assesses some alternative ways of travelling



When most fantasy characters begin travelling between adventures, they do so on horseback. The horse is, after all, a symbol of wealth in most societies and its possession separates the adventurers from the seething mass of peasantry. On the other hand, there are always individuals who want to be different, or with purposes other than personal transport. This article covers the alternative methods of transport available in the AD&D® game.

Axe beak: Axe beaks are very rare mounts. Not only are they difficult to train because of their stupidity, they are not a comfortable ride. Their speed suffers when carrying all but the lightest of riders (halflings and gnomes), and their carnivorous habits make them expensive to feed. Its main advantage is that it can defend itself if under attack. Axe beak eggs cost 15gp, fledgelings 20gp.

Boar, war: The martial mounts of goblins, kobolds, halfings and gnomes, the war-boar has the same characteristics as the wild boar in the **Monster Manual**. They are very rarely available to gnomes or halflings, but most major goblin and kobold strongholds will have one for every thirty inhabitants, and the riders will be the tribe's elite (full hit points).

Camel: Camels are used only in desert regions — including tundra, for which a long-coated species has been bred. They are notoriously uncooperative, and any party which does not hire (or include) an experienced camel driver is in trouble. Their advantage is that they can go two weeks without food or water without ill effects if they have stored up reserves. They must spend one day getting over a period without water, three days getting over a period without food. During this time they will consume as much water or food as they would normally have consumed during the period of deprivation. This can be done at any oasis on payment of a reasonably extortionate tribute to the tribe which controls the oasis.

Chariot: Although they were originally designed to be used as personal transport, chariots rapidly became battle vessels, armoured and arrayed with spikes to protect the driver and spearman. Their main problem in battle was the vulnerability of the horses, as by the time barding was developed chariots were no longer in common usage. In the AD&D game, although chariots and barding coexist, it still seems impractical for chariot horses to be barded, as it would slow them down. There are three kinds of chariot: one, two and four horsepower. Horses trained to draw chariots were more expensive than normal because of the extra training required. A horse for a single-horse chariot will cost 125% of the price of the normal horse of that kind, two-horse chariot drawers cost 150% of normal price, and four-horse teams must be bought as a group, costing 200% of normal price each, so the team for a four-horse chariot drawn by heavy warhorses cost 2400gp, at least. Any horse trained for two-horse chariots may be hitched with any other, but four-horse teams must be used together. Replacing one horse lost from a team costs 100gp to retrain the new team, replacing two costs 300gp. The figures given in the table on page 3 for chariots assume a draught-horse team. If warhorses are used, use the following movement rates instead:

Chariot	Light WH	Medium WH	Heavy WH
1-horse	15"	12"	9"
2-horse	20"	15"	12"
4-horse	24"	18"	15"
Load-modifier	.6	.8	.9

The load modifier is that proportion of the draught-horse encumbrance which a warhorse-drawn chariot will bear, so a two-horse chariot drawn by light war horses can carry 600lb: 0.6 times the standard 1000lb. War chariots are heavier, and can only carry half the listed amount as armour weighs down the chariot body.

Elephant: Like camels, elephants require experienced handlers. In fact, each elephant has its own "driver": a mahout. In addition to their mahout, elephants can carry eight people in a howdah. Their main disadvantage is the colossal amount of food each elephant needs. Only the Indian elephant can be tamed.

Griffon: A very desirable mount, which can fly, defend itself, carry a reasonably large load, and even fend for itself if you trust it to come back. There are three main problems with griffons: they are carnivorous, which makes them expensive to feed, they cannot be used in a group with horses or hippogriffs, as they will eventually try to eat them however well-trained they are, and every time you encounter a cleric or dedicated worshipper of Prometheus they will try to kill your griffon.

Hippogriff: This beast has all the griffon's advantages and none of its problems. Unfortunately, they will never breed in captivity, which griffons will, and their less aggressive nature and competition for territory with griffons makes them very rare.

Horse: Horses come in five varities: light riding horses (which can also pull light carts and buckboards), draught horses (Shires and Clydesdales), and the three warhorses: light and heavy are the war-trained versions of the riding and draught horses, medium are a crossbred variety. Like all other herbivores, horses can graze for their food if there is enough in the area, but they must spend at least half their time doing so, which cuts the travel time each day in half. Grain-fed horses are also known to have better stamina than those which graze for their food.

Mastodon & Mammoth: These are similar to elephants for all game purposes, but they can be found and used in all climates except tropical.

Mule: Mules can cause even more problems than camels, because most parties feel that they can control mules and do not bother hiring a handler for them, when in fact they can be just as unhelpful.

Pegasus: The pegasus is the ultimate mount for the AD&D game (although I know one character who would prefer a vulture lion): fast-flying, intelligent, reliable, and easy to look after. Possession of one assures everybody that you're one of the good guys and can be trusted, and so on. They will serve good characters, but even when freely associating with good people they have never been known to breed in captivity, not through lack of desire but through some physiological mechanism which prevents the female from producing eggs.

Pegasi are very, very rarely offered for sale as eggs or young since their theft from the nest probably means the death of the parents, which is a serious crime in most countries where pegasi live (where it is not a crime they have been wiped out by such activities). The usual way of obtaining a pegasus is to befriend a wild one when you meet it in the mountains. A character's chance of doing so is charisma, plus level, minus fifteen as a percentage. Rangers and barbarians get a modifier of +5%. Check only once for each character, no matter how many pegasi are encountered in a herd. Thus, if Laird Vaara, the fourteenth level barbarian, is wandering through the mountains when he encounters a group of pegasi at a lakeside, he has a 16 (charisma) + 14 (level) - 15 (modifier) + 5 (barbarian) = 20% chance of befriending one; but his friend Lord Kili the dwarven fighter has only a 10 (charisma) + 9 (level) - 15 (modifier) = 4% chance. Cavaliers do not gain any special bonus as they can be recognised by pegasi, and their skill with horse-like creatures merely cancels out the pegasus' dislike of heavily armoured people. It is possible for people to have no chance at all of taming a pegasus.

Pony: Ponies are the usual mounts of the small races: dwarves, gnomes, and halflings. They cannot be trained to endure battle conditions, so there is no such thing as a "war-pony".

Rowboats: In the table below, boats are given speed and a number of rowers. Decreasing the number of rowers slows the boat proportionately: one rower in a 12' boat will slow it to a 1½" maximum speed.

Unicorn: Unicorns are even more choosy about riders than pegasi. They will only permit good maidens to ride them, nor will they permit their rider to put any harness of any kind on them, which effectively means they cannot be ridden in battle unless the maiden is a very skilled bareback rider.

Worg: Worgs are rare mounts as they are almost as good an indication of alignment as pegasi, but for a different reason. They will only work willingly with a rider who indulges their evil desires.

In the table below, the speed listed is that of the unladen animal or vehicle. If carrying 25% or more of the maximum encumbrance it is slowed by 25%. If the weight carried is half the maximum allowed, speed is halved and if three-quarters or more is carried the speed is only one-quarter of that listed. If laden above the maximum, beasts will not move unless panicked. Flying mounts' capacities are increased by 50% while grounded. The load includes the weight of the driver/rider and all his or her equipment.

	Speed	Load	Cost	Feed cost	Feed weight	Water weight
Axe beak	18"	400lb	100gp	5gp	10lb	70lb
Boar, war	15"	300lb	125gp	10sp	15lb	75lb
Camel	18"	800lb	40gp	10sp	25lb	125lb
Cart, pony-drawn	9"	500lb	50gp			
Chariot, 1 horse	8"	750lb	125gp			
Chariot, 2 horse	10"	1000lb	250gp			
Chariot, 4 horse	12"	1500lb	500gp			
Coracle	3"	250lb	5gp			
Draught horse	12"	800lb	30gp	14sp	40lb	250lb
Elephant	12"	1600lb	250gp	3gp	140lb	750lb
Griffon	30"	450lb	5000gp	15gp	75lb	75lb
Hippogriff	36"	400lb	5000gp	5gp	75lb	75lb*
Heavy warhorse	15"	750lb	300gp	14gp	40lb	250lb
Light riding horse	24"	400lb	25gp	7sp	25lb	125lb
Light warhorse	21"	500lb	150gp	7sp	25lb	125lb
Medium warhorse	18"	650lb	225gp	10sp	30lb	175lb
Mammoth	12"	1500lb	350gp	5gp	125lb	350lb
Mastodon	15"	1250lb	350gp	5gp	125lb	350lb
Mule	12"	300lb	20gp	7sp	25lb	125lb
Pegasus	48"	375lb		12sp	35lb	75lb
Pony	12"	300lb	15gp	5sp	20lb	100lb
Rowboat, 6'	6"	1000lb	5gp	(2 rowers, 4 seats)		
Rowboat, 12'	6"	2000lb	12½gp	(4 rowers, 8 seats)		
Rowboat, 16'	9"	2500lb	20gp	(6 rowers, 10 seats)		
Unicorn	24"	500lb		7sp	25lb	125lb
Wagon, 1 horse	9"	1000lb	100gp			
Wagon, 2 horse	9"	2250lb	125gp			
Wagon, 4 horse	6"	5000lb	200gp			
Worg	18"	350lb	75gp	15gp	30lb	125lb

* Hippogriff food can be varied up to 15gp/30lb depending on the quantity of meat.

All figures given are for one week's food and water supply.

The load listed also includes barding (horse armour), which weighs:

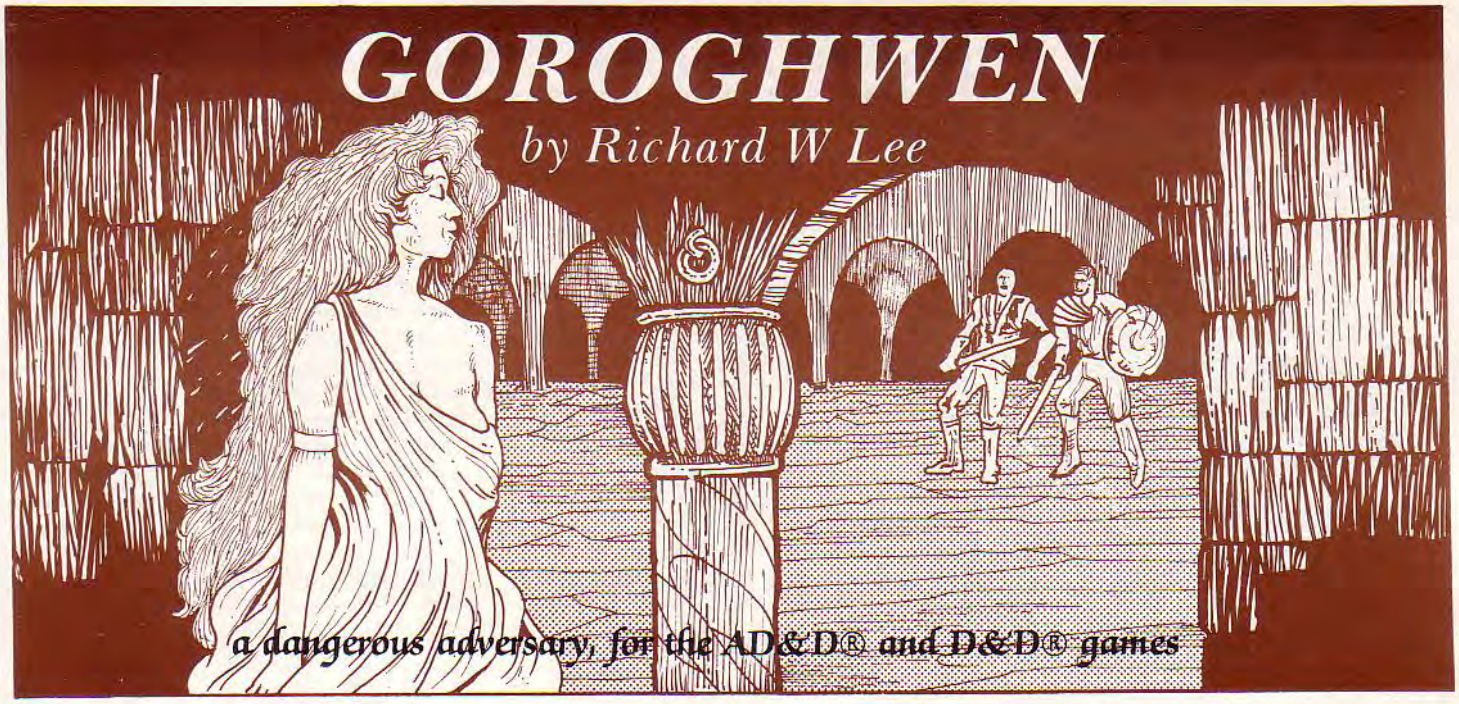
Barding	Light WH	Medium WH	Heavy WH	Armour class
Leather	50lb	63lb	75lb	5
Chainmail	100lb	125lb	150lb	2
Plate mail	200lb	250lb	300lb	0

Bridle bit, reins: 5lb
Normal saddle: 15lb
War saddle: 25lb
Saddle bag and blanket: negligible (but bags' contents weigh the appropriate amount)
Panniers: 25lb

Chris Felton

GOROGHWEN

by Richard W Lee



a dangerous adversary, for the AD&D® and D&D® games

The Goroghwen is a difficult creature to describe accurately or to define in the conventional way, thus an encounter with a specific beast is described first, in order that the feeling of the monster may be encapsulated. The individual should be developed by the DM.

History

Searching through the wreckage of a monastery sacked long ago, a party of adventurers uncovered a short text from a well hidden compartment. Removing it — and some extremely valuable jewellery — they took it to a sage to be deciphered. She, deciding to humour the memory of the monk who wrote the text, copied it. This strange document can be found in a few libraries now, on long forgotten shelves. Thus the following tale comes to you.

'The world is a circle, and all things have their cause and effect. The leaf withers on the tree, falls and disappears into nothing; but eventually from its life, shadow-like as it might seem in the annals of the world, the sapling springs to life. And so it is with all things, and not only the stuff of the physical world. Beings there are who feed on any life-giving energy, however seemingly intangible. Such a parasite is the Goroghwen, lady of terror, whom I call by that name for convenience though it is a term she would scorn. In lairs she carves for herself out of the living rock, she lives to feed on the fear of lesser animals. Few survive to report the horror of an encounter with her, still fewer understand just what they have faced or how lucky they are to be living still. I alone have escaped from the particular demon I shall describe for you, and I understand too well how she will seek me out and punish me for this revelation. But all life is but shadow, and I dedicate that which is left of this my passing dream to the hope that some doughty and god-fearing party will avenge me, and that my tormentor shall not wait long before she follows me into darkness.

It was a year ago that my adventure occurred, but I have aged much more than a twelvemonth since that night. I had left the monastery secretly through a window, following my wont to spend the occasional night at a nearby tavern. As I say, I was young then, and the ascetic life of the monk seemed harsh to me. Keeping to the shadows on the way and choosing my habitual darkened corner. I sat down to drink the first brew quietly. As usual I carefully examined each of the room's occupants for safety's sake, for to be found to be deceitful seemed then to be the worst thing that could possibly happen to man. And so it was that I saw one I was sure I recognised. I watched him for some time, fascinated at the completeness of his disguise. He was conversing swiftly and earnestly with a small group of young looking travellers, the kind who set out in droves seeking adventure, and who, like as not, die unknown in the wilderness, a meagre way along their path to glory. It seemed to me that he cajoled them, encouraged them, played ruthlessly on their lust for honour. After some while they got up as a group, obviously having come to some decision, and made for the door.

My curiosity was aroused. Why should Ranik — he who was my tutor — be here, cloaked under an illusion? What business did he have with the adventurers? Why had his eyes glinted with a disturbing malevolence when he led them out into the darkness? With the bold foolishness of youth I decided to try to get to the bottom of the mystery.

They moved quickly, joking loudly with one another at first but becoming more tense and correspondingly quieter as they advanced further into the squalid and stinking backstreets. I moved quick and silent as a whisper in the night, my heart beating with an excitement and fear such as I had never felt before. At last, after many confusing turns and nearly an hour's walking, they suddenly descended a stairwell into what I thought must be the cellar of a large and crumbling mansion — a relic of years gone by in what was now the poorest ghetto. I waited in silence for some time, wondering whether or not to follow. Then, on the other side of the street and some hundred yards or so down, I saw a dark shape rise as if out of the ground. To my horror it began to come toward me. My heart beat so fast that I became dizzy with fright. As the apparition came nearer, though, I realised it was of no supernatural origin. Rather, I recognised Ranik, now stripped of disguise and with cloak billowing out so as to lend him an unearthly shape. Far from bringing relief however, I saw an expression of such evil exultation on his face that it made my fear grow to new proportions. I shivered as I noticed he carried a small but bulging sack, clutched tightly to his chest.

And it was then that I began to hear cries of terror emanating from the cellar. Ranik chuckled to himself with delirious glee, and I took care to wait until I was sure he was gone for good before I summoned my courage and descended the steps.

The sight that met my eyes was not the horror I had expected. Dusty and derelict, the cellar was a vast and complex series of square rooms divided by arches and pillars. I imagined at one time each enclave would have housed its own rack of choice wines. And only a short way on, the small band of adventurers walked, tense, weapons bared, glaring at the shadows as if something lurked there. And though they walked, they advanced not at all, but stayed in that same square.

I was about to call to them, but instinct halted me, and all at once the whole group burst into manic action. I saw them close in a circle around their magic user, swiping wildly, and suddenly there was a loud clap and a burst of flame as a fireball resounded against a wall. One of the warriors fell, clutching at his side, though I could see no injury, and the sorcerous one stepped forward bravely to defend his fellow, swinging awkwardly with his staff. No foe that I could see approached. And then once more all were wary and still, and the cleric bent to tend to the fallen warrior, muttering garbled and alien words.

It was then I saw a slim figure standing silent in a recess quite close to the party. She was much involved with the actions of the men and seemed to watch almost as though they were on a stage. She grinned with a mischief which seemed sweet and innocent, the smile of a young girl playing a practical joke on a doting but well-loved elder. She made a strange gesture with her hand, and the party, which had started to advance once more, actually moved to another of the enclosures; as they reached its centre they tensed, again as one, and the warriors dashed forward and pressed hands against some invisible barrier between the pillars. Frantically they pressed, and their companions leapt to help them. The fear on their faces cried out to me, like the fear of the fly caught in the web, with the spider casually peering out from safety. And something drew me to look across at the maid, and I saw her squirming with a delight which still did not seem evil, still seemed the rapture of a magnificent child.

By this time I shook with fright for I began to understand the truth of this macabre scene. Here was a being not evil as we understand the word, but predatory nevertheless, and infinitely cunning in the hunt; a being which lived on the naked fear of fellow animals, which had somehow managed to adapt itself to feed on the raw energy charged by this abstract terror. But even as I came to these conclusions, my understanding, far from defending me from peril, actually led the eyes of that unlikely witch to me. For while I mused, the panic of the party had diminished, as they sought a plan of action. And as the strong and delicious taste of this fear lessened, so their host caught a subtly different tang, an unexpected side-dish which my apprehension created. And she smiled her sweet smile. As I turned, I saw bright eyes leap out at me from a room suddenly dark, and ahead a passage wound on, which seemed to have no beginning and no end in its inky blackness.

I ran for all I was worth, blind with terror, and I abandoned thought and reason, praying only that the sick lambent eyes should come no closer, that the clammy and clawing hands should not touch me. And so it went on for a timeless period, until a sudden memory of a beautiful innocent face brought me up short. Hands grasped me and sought to pull me to the ground, to smother me under dank and ill-smelling rags. But I remembered the face and closed my eyes to shut out the vision. Carefully I prepared myself as I had done a thousand times in the monastery, schooled my thoughts to sink into that limbo of meditation which is our only real contact with our gods and with ourselves. When I opened my eyes once more the lights and the darkness surrounding them began to sink into shadows, spectral, as if super-imposed over the scene of the cellar. And I walked slowly and with measured steps towards the stairs. Several times I felt the spirits of half-imaginings flit across my eyes, felt the whisper of insubstantial nightmares trying to gain my attention, but I focused all on the gentle likeness of my god, and passed, without once looking back, up and out onto the street above.

I made straight for the monastery where I intended to confess my sins and begin life again with a new fervour in the service of my clement god, whose power I had so recently witnessed. But as I approached my erstwhile home a scent of burning wafted to me across the thin early morning air. When I arrived I saw all that was left of our sanctuary was a shroud of wood-ash on the blackened earth, and of my brothers of the cloth I saw naught but a few twisted corpses. The only face I could recognise was that of Ranik for it alone had not been ravaged by the fire. About his face there played the unmistakable grimace of terror and his eyes stared still open and wild. I could find no mark on his body to tell how his death had come about, but I needed no prompting to guess.

And so, reader, the witch had her revenge on me, a child's revenge and one with little logic. I had resisted her, had not played the game, and she punished me in the only way she knew how. Since that day I have been plagued by her minions, my life made a hell for me by slow torture. For the beast I have described is not the only being to have learned to gain succour from the strange diet of fear — merely the greatest, the lion of this unlikely jungle. Since that day I have slept hardly at all, for the old oblivion is now crowded with nightmares against which I have no defence when my soul is tired. And wherever I go it is as if I am watched, and if I whirl round in the darkness to find nothing, I feel her laughter. She knows I'm slipping. And so it has gone on for a year, and each day I have sought some new wisdom which might set me free from her. To no avail, for the world of men knows nothing and believes less of this strange race I describe, and I am thought to be mad. So now I return to this place where I was closest to my god, and welcome the death that this revelation you read will bring. For it is an afront to her, a danger even. And I know she will destroy me at once and without a qualm when her minions report back, glad indeed to relish my last sweet savour of fear.

And so you who read this, beware of the knowledge you own. And I pray that Tuvek give you strength if you be brave enough to seek out this horror'.

Here was a being not evil as we understand it, but predatory nevertheless, and infinitely cunning in the hunt; a being which lived on naked fear....

Guidance for DMs

The Goroghwen is a difficult beast to DM since she obeys none of the normal laws which tend to restrict more common-or-garden beings. Her power varies on the amount of fear around, and thus she will typically be found in a place such as the monk discovered, in a dungeon or similar situation, where there is an appreciable amount of natural apprehension. The referee might find the following generalisations of use:

1. From the initial fear of the unknown such as must always be apparent in a party setting out into a dungeon, she gains power to create her initial illusions, weak spectral images which have no substance and no real potency except to induce fear. The Goroghwen often makes use of the image of a labyrinth, fooling the party that they are lost, confusing the sense of direction. Thus, looking back, a PC might notice a passage leading off which somehow they had missed when they passed by. Mapping would prove a disaster. The party might also hear the sounds of rats scraping, see spiders crawling on the roof: anything which might be likely to amplify revulsion or fear. The DM should judge whether or not the ploy has worked by the reactions of the players. Any but rather poor role-players should be disturbed by now.

2. The lair proper is characterised by a thick and permanent **darkness** spell, against which only strong sources of light have any effect — for instance a lamp or torch would only glow, not piercing the surrounding blackness; a large fire or a strong **light** spell might flickeringly last for a while, but illusions might mask even this. Typically, the witch will allow a small amount of dancing light, casting deep shadows, and frightening the party with the strength of a spell which can so limit their own powerful magics.

3. The simple **teleport** or conveyer belt floor system with which the party in the monk's script were fooled is a favourite as it keeps the victim in a desired place, and allows what is really quite a limited space to be used to maximum effect. Distance obviously plays quite a part in fear, as the party would be much less scared if they felt they were still near the entrance and could get out quickly if the need arose. Of course they could be led in circles, but this would not fool them for long. The Goroghwen prefers that the party should not realise they are being cheated by illusions for as long as possible.

4. In a powerful party, the witch will use her illusions to separate characters, and will try to quickly despatch the more dangerous adversaries (those who suspect, have trained minds, have spells which might foil her machinations etc).

5. By this stage the mistress of dreams has perhaps amassed sufficient power to be able to create more substantial visions. The examples of the way she implements this in the text above are:

A) by an assumed combat situation: the adventurers are assailed by monsters which they do not recognise. Typically they will find that these beasts cannot be damaged by normal means, or perhaps they split into two when hit. When the party begin to despair — surely the assailants can't miss them again! — they score a fatal hit on the 'leader' of their enemies and the rest are routed.
B) they are assailed by some known ferocious beast and one of their number is hit — luckily for an incredibly small amount of damage, though it bleeds a lot. A lucky hit, an alternative prey, or perhaps even 'divine intervention' will distract the beast and once more the party can pat themselves on the back.
C) the old sealed room scenario, guaranteed to stimulate frantic panic. The adventurers find themselves locked in a small confine and cannot get out. Water or sand could start to pour in as soon as the party calm down.
D) an attack by nauseous creatures, crawling all over one of the group, who is dragged down by weight of numbers, shuddering with horror and suffering every symptom of suffocating claustrophobia. They are beaten back, only to return again; Gollum-like creatures, eyes glowing in the dark, clammy and ill-smelling. The Goroghwen's illusions bear most resemblance to **shadow monsters** (as in the Illusionist's spell). However, they are more controllable (as shown above) and are not wounded in normal fashion — no amount of damage will dispel a Goroghwen's illusion.

5. And so the wiles of the Goroghwen could continue for ever, with her prey imagining themselves to be in a normal dungeon, which in fact only exists for them in their dreams. It is up to the DM to make his PCs suspicious of the situation, make them aware that something is wrong — the best way is to let them have some (necessarily limited) rumour of what they face or, quite simply, to make the encounters seem contrived (preferably in a way which doesn't merely lead the party to think they have a bad DM!) as the party congratulate themselves on having defeated a monster the walls of the labyrinth somehow seem to have gone.

6. The Goroghwen has a little use for treasure except in bribing accomplices to restock her larder — like Ranik above. There is likely to be much lying around, perhaps in a pile but not hidden or much cared for — the pickings of all her dead victims. The Goroghwen will have learned to use any magical item in her lair.

7. The Goroghwen prefers to entrap humans, whose terror is much more deepseated and varied than that of animals (and thus more nutritious). Adventurers, having more will-power and more courage, thus have a greater capacity for fear than the man in the street. They are a culinary delight to this being, who, necessarily, feels no fear herself.

8. The Goroghwen choose to appear normally as extremely attractive females, as in this guise they have least chance of being attacked if their illusions fail them. Typically, if stripped of their defences and confronted in this form, they will have some stock cock-and-bull story with which to try and fool the party — and perhaps a servant too on whom to blame the illusions ('I am a captive of that nasty wizard whom you fought so bravely on the stairs. I am sure there must be a ransom for me — and I know where the evil wizard kept his loot. Please set me free').

9. If the wily party is no longer fooled, the Goroghwen has D4 hit points +1 for each 3 game minutes the party was fooled by the illusions. She will not resist an attack and will fall dead after a single blow though she can regenerate herself to the strength she chooses at any time she likes. To kill her the party must burn the body and cast a **permanence** spell on the ashes.

10. **Dispel magic, detect illusion** etc do not work since the images are created by the players' own fear, and until this goes, the power which creates the holograph is not dispersed. Even **dispel fear** has only limited effect, as it cancels only panic like that of the **fear** spell. It does not allay natural apprehension. It is obviously a set-back to the Goroghwen, but the base source of her power remains. In essence, the characters' main weapon lies in their players' quick wits — if they are swift to sense the illusions, quick to realise their source and inventive in trying ways to escape their effects, the DM should reward them with speedy success and even a low level party might suffer little. To the unimaginative, however, who cannot get to grips with the problem because they haven't seen its like before (there is no similar beast in the MM), this monster could be lethal.

11. Dice throws against **fear** (as the spell) should be made by the DM whenever he feels the terror amounting to panic level in the party (difficult to judge, but their actions should give some guide). If they manage to save, they will notice the images become a little more spectral, and their next saving throw should be made at +2 (though the Goroghwen might be out to get them before then). 4 consecutive saves lead to the illusions being dispelled for good for that player. As various characters fail the throw, the party could well be split into increasingly smaller groups.

12. Damage caused by spectral beasts is never real, but the character should believe it so: thus wounds are always slight, one or two hit points only. And yet if the imagined wounds exceeded the total of the character's hit points he dies for real — of fright! Things like **cure light wounds** spells seem to act with maximum effect — the Goroghwen wants to keep her larder as healthy as possible! Needless to say, if the Goroghwen has reason to fear the character, this safety valve disappears, though the character has a chance, if he asks for it, of (5 x Wis)% to disbelieve the damage. If a character is successful in this, thereafter the chance is (10 x Wis)%. Note that disbelieving the illusions may stll leave the character believing 'wounds' received from that illusion. The DM should not discourage him from so doing. Only if the player decides for himself that the wounds are unreal, and informs the DM of his decision, should the wounds disappear.

13. DMs should always remember that the Goroghwen is a highly intelligent beast, probably a lot more gifted than the characters themselves. Thus DMs should utilise the greater information available to them to make sure that she doesn't lose to the players through simple stupidity. Her main limitation lies in the fact that her magical power is not storable — it depends wholly on the fear which is its energy. Some of the nutrition of the fear she can and does save, in the same way that we save food as blubber. Only under exceptional circumstances, however, will she ever draw on this to cast magic, for it saps her strength and would take a long time to restock. The DM should decide which spells she would be capable of in extremity (ie being killed or captured), but I would suggest either a strong version of the **fear** spell — no saving throw — or some manner of defensive or mobility enchantment to help her escape.

Richard W Lee

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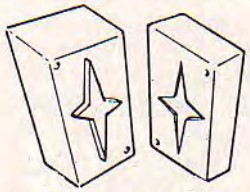

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A New World

Each change of many-coloured life he drew,
Exhausted worlds, and then imagined new:
Dr Samuel Johnson

We can't quite claim the intellectual credibility of Samuel Johnson in creating new worlds or exhausting old ones, but having published 16 issues of **IMAGINE** magazine, the time is ripe to develop — with your help — the modules and what have you into something more.

Welcome to Pelinore

Pelinore is a new world for brave adventurers — or craven swine if you play that way — to use as a campaign background. It includes most of the AD&D® and D&D® modules so far published in IMAGINE magazine, and it will provide forward links into some of the modules, brief encounters and other game articles that are yet to come.

Month-by-month we are going to publish new material that will build up a picture of a complete milieu — a fantasy setting in which your characters will find princes and peasants, wizards and warriors, in locations varying from inhospitable desert to gleaming cities. As you collect each part, your knowledge of this world will grow.

This does not mean that everything we publish from now on will only be for Pelinore — far from it. All the material that carries a Pelinore 'tag' will still stand alone, or be adaptable to suit a DM's existing campaign. But sufficient information will be provided to ensure that DMs can fit the new material into this new world.

Most game worlds, no matter how big, seem to suffer from one major problem: they are so well defined that they leave no room for development. As a result, all those DMs who want to use them as the basis of their campaigns are stuck with what the designers have already produced. Rather than following that course, we want to retain complete flexibility in Pelinore. Consequently, the world will be explored as contributors write new material for the magazine, but the whole will never be as 'complete' as Greyhawk; there will always be somewhere to insert a new idea.

At present, the map of Pelinore is largely uncharted. It's a whole world; to be created, defined, mapped, explored and used by DMs as it stands or as a source of useful material for their own campaigns.

The world of Pelinore is also infinitely expandable — Pelinoreans believe the world to be flat and, although there may be an edge somewhere to fall off, nobody has yet found it — or returned to tell anybody about finding it.

Pelinore is ready for what you want to make of it. Mini-modules, Brief Encounters, single buildings within a city/town/village, and articles — on running a wizard's guild, court etiquette, castle building, histories of the world, (to name but a few!) — can all have an overall context to make life much easier for the poor overworked DM, with better games for all as a result. If the particular place you need for your module or whatever doesn't exist on the world as currently mapped, send it in anyway — the framework of the world is going to be as flexible as possible. Pelinore is going to grow and develop over the years — and achieve much more 'solidity' as a result.

PELINORE

The IMAGINE magazine Campaign World

As far as rules systems are concerned, the world of Pelinore will be based solidly on the **AD&D** and **D&D** games. The two games share many concepts and ideas — so Pelinore is, for the most part, an AD&D/D&D game 'generic' world, at least when rules become involved. These two games also represent the standard system with which most players and DMs are familiar.

This doesn't mean that we are ruling out any other systems — such as **RuneQuest** or the **DRAGONQUEST®** game. To aid the process of creating a world that will fit as many RPG systems as possible, IMAGINE magazine will be publishing a short series of articles on translating characters from one system to another. Look for the first part of this in issue 18.

And what of Pelinore itself, its customs, cities and peoples? Here are a few ideas to start things moving....

Around The World In 80 Lines

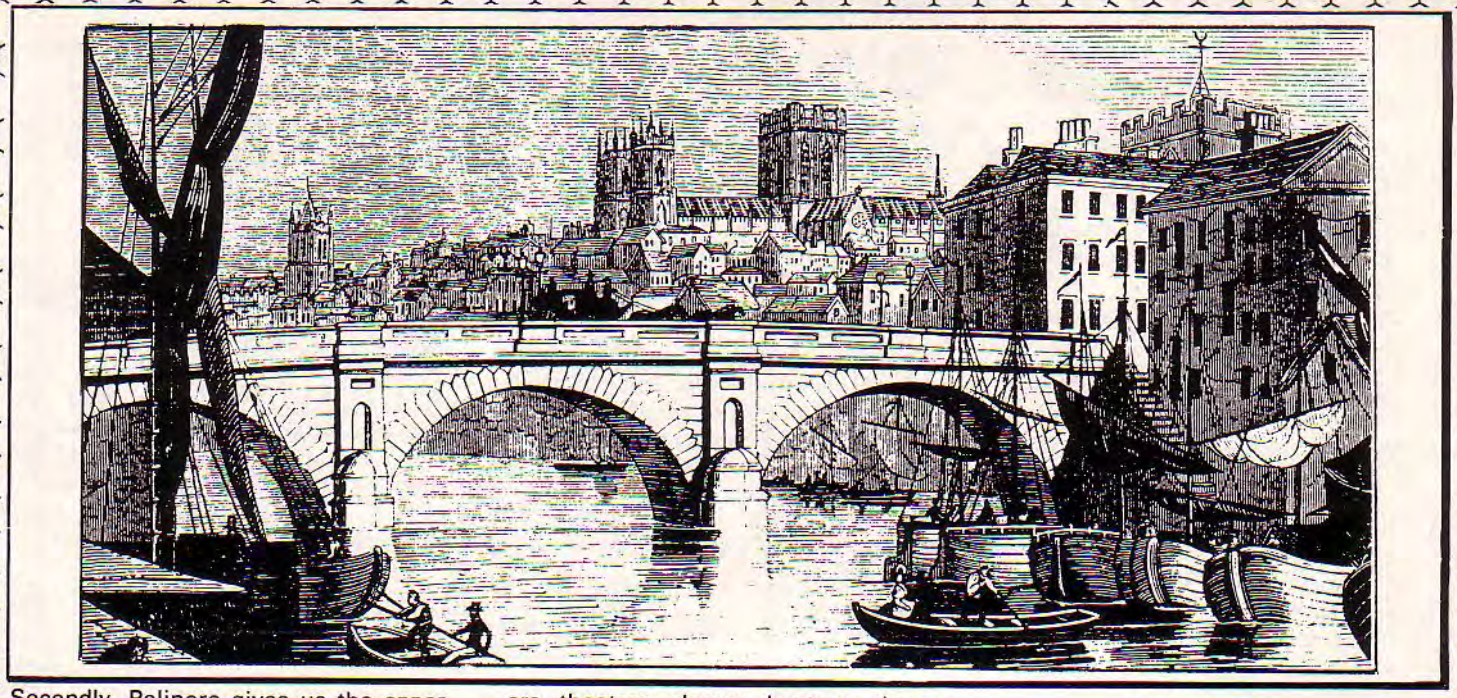
The world of Pelinore is flat — everyone knows that — and its centre is at Worldheart. Now, you'll hear plenty of different opinions among sages about just what Worldheart is, but as no-one has travelled to the edges of the world and returned, so has nobody penetrated the mysteries of what lies at Worldheart. Rumour has it that a plain of grey land stretches from the edge of the world as far as the eye can see, that ships have sailed off the edge into nothingness, even that the world is round!...

The civilised lands of Pelinore include the Theocratic Principalities, ruled with a rod of iron by the Council of Truth, the islands of the Splintered Lands with their myriad cultures, not all of which are 'human' by any means and the Tradecities of Xir, eternally squabbling with each other. Many places you will know of already; like Borth, that little port with the beacon *(from **IMAGINE** #1)*, or once-proud Varit, destroyed in the war between two noble houses *(#3)*. But these are just the beginning....

Pelinore — a Reader's Guide

All of these places — and many more — will be explored in the years to come, creating solid background campaign material for DMs to draw upon.

So how will Pelinore 'work'? We want it to do at least two jobs, and possibly a lot more as it develops. The first of these is the simplest — a section at the start of many modules will give the DM the location on Pelinore where the module is set, or in the case of Brief Encounters a suitable range of locations. It could also include some more general material related to Pelinore as a whole. Gradually this information will build up into a world setting. This will be advisory only, a DM will still be able to use any of the modules in his or her campaign (as happens now), but the overall result will be a campaign background for DMs to use as they wish, with as many of the magazine scenarios included as suits each group's needs.



Secondly, Pelinore gives us the opportunity to publish useful material that we haven't been able to use before, pieces that are too short, for example. We have always managed to avoid the trap of publishing endless lists of new monsters, magic items and spells without any form of context. We still won't produce lists, but with Pelinore to set things in there are all kinds of possibilities.

Take a city or town for instance. Sooner or later, the players want to come up out of the dungeon, or in from the wilderness and have their characters wander around a city of some sort. Yet DMs often have neither the time nor inclination to create a city — after all, it's a LOT of work. But all is not lost. One of the first Pelinorean 'DM aids' is going to detail a city building or two, the non-player characters who live there and occasionally a brief plot outline for an adventure that could involve a party. DMs will get, in the space of three or four issues, the basis of a thriving town/city for adventurers to explore when they are not down a dungeon.

All the buildings will relate to one overall city plan, but the city is going to be big — very big. Without straining the bounds of credibility, we want there to be enough room to allow lots of variety in the city, its inhabitants and, above all, culture — an 'Arab' quarter, or a merchants' quarter or as many others as you can think up.

The buildings in the first article *(to appear next issue)* are based around a small market square just inside the city's western gate. We have tried to provide all the facilities that a weary, battle-scarred group of hardy adventurers would need for rest and recuperation after a hard day's adventuring. Included are an inn, an armourer's, an apothecary, a farrier's, a small shrine or temple, a drinking house and a weaponsmith's. That starts things off nicely, but in time we hope to add much more: houses, villas, hovels, markets, pubs, taverns, bowyers, fletchers, theatres, slavers, boatmen, horse-traders, moneychangers, moneylenders, butchers, bakers, candlestickmakers, wheelrights, builders, sages, shipwrights, all kinds of craftsmen, mapmakers, scribes, libraries, a city watch station (or two), prisons, a thieves' guildhouse, a gambling den, a wizard's (very traditional) tower or ten, halls, courts, temples, shrines, amphitheatres, racetracks.....

You'll find more information about the city — in broad terms — in the section overleaf called 'The City League'.

On the larger scale Pelinore is at a similar stage of development. A good part of the map that exists (in very rough form) still has signs reading 'Here Be Dragons!' all over it. Beyond the edges of that map little else exists in solid, mapped form. Some places, people and happenings have been 'placed' — the City League, the seaport of Borth and the Beacon at Enon Tor, the Order of the Black Rose (*#11*), Rosebury (*#6*). These exist on Pelinore as it now stands, but beyond them....

The first major definitions of parts of Pelinore are going to appear over the next few issues of IMAGINE magazine and in an IMAGINE magazine special edition (due to be published sometime before Christmas). This will collect some of the earlier modules together, and present even more of the background of Pelinore, including a map of the immediate region beyond the City League. But although large parts of the world of Pelinore are not fully defined, some guidance can already be offered about what could be 'beyond the horizon', through the offices of a Pelinorean institution which is the source of much wisdom — and occasional falsehood — about the world. This is the institution that holds the knowledge of Pelinore in its keeping; the Order of Heralds. Overleaf, you will find your first glimpse of this ancient and mysterious profession.

Pelinore — a Writer's Guide

One thing quickly becomes clear when you start designing a world; there's a lot of work! That's where you, the **IMAGINE** magazine reader, comes in. If you feel you could add something to this project, then send it in — as you already do with ordinary submissions — and we'll look it over. We're sure many of you will have plenty of ideas of your own, but for now, try thinking along the following lines:

1. Pelinore — a land of adventure. We are always on the look-out for good scenarios, and with Pelinore around we will need even more! Those adventurers who have already triumphed in Borth or Rosebury or Braeme (*#11*) need more adventures to go on — adventures which link together to extend the world of Pelinore. Your adventure could take place in one of the places we have already described, or just over the horizon, extending the scope of the original module. For example, what has driven the creatures out of the wilderness to the south of Braeme in **Black Roses** ?

2. The City League — virtually a world within a world. All of that, of course, means detailed descriptions for DMs to help them run the city in their campaigns. If you don't want to write a complete module, then how about a single building? The list given on this page shows you some of the possibilities, but we can only scratch the surface. The more writers who contribute, the more 'alive' the City League will be.

3. The Guilds — Pelinore's major institutions need properly defining. All sorts of Guilds, for anybody from Wizards and Thieves to Butchers, Bakers and Candlestickmakers, could provide employment for brave adventurers — or powerful opposition to such freebooters. It's up to you!

The Order of Heralds.

The Honourable Order of Heralds is an organisation whose origins are obscure — and as the chief archivists of 'civilised' Pelinore, the Heralds have had plenty of opportunity to 'lose' any documentary evidence as to their origins and true status. One thing is clear — the Heralds are now vital to the running of Pelinore, whether in times of peace or war.

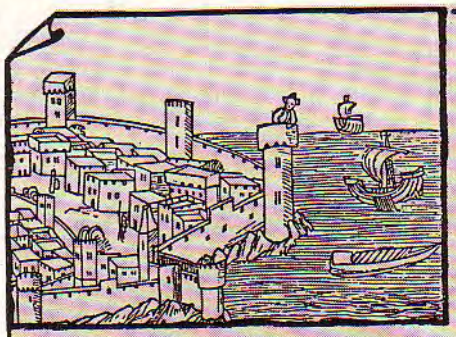
The Heralds own histories claim that they were founded in 'the Halls of Worldheart', and that they spread from there at the decree of a great ruler named Prias. Originally, they dealt with such matters as the organisation of tournaments, private wars and lineage of noble families. They still deal with the record keeping aspects of warfare — listing casualties and arranging the ransom for captured nobles (some sources claim they take a 25% commission for this service). Over the years since their foundation, the Order has gradually 'acquired' a number of additional tasks and duties, although who — if anyone — ever gave them the authority to do so has never been determined. The Heralds themselves never allow the question to be debated....

The Order of Heralds is now the most widespread organisation on all of Pelinore. There are few cities, towns, duchies or any other governing bodies that do not have a Herald somewhere in attendance. They oversee business transactions, writing the formalised contracts between merchants, and occasionally providing letters of credit. They count heads, windows, sheep or whatever needs taxing for governments. They draw up the charters for guilds — when instructed to do so. They write treaties of unbreakable friendship between nations — and count the dead when war breaks out. The passionate (and illiterate) commission them to compose missives of undying love. They collect, collate and sell documents, maps, rumours, news, truths and half-truths from the far corners of Pelinore.

Despite — or because of — all these duties the Heralds have always maintained a careful neutrality in all political affairs. They are universally respected as absolutely neutral arbiters, and protected by the force of law in all civilised areas — where, after all, they drafted the laws in the first place.

From Worldheart to the Splintered Lands, the Theocratic Principalities and the Tradecities of Xir, Heralds are about their business... and other people's business.

It is the Order of Heralds that will act as the 'glue' that holds Pelinore together. From their extensive libraries of historical documents will come the maps and details of Pelinore, the detailed background to many of the adventures that will appear in IMAGINE magazine over the coming years.



The City League

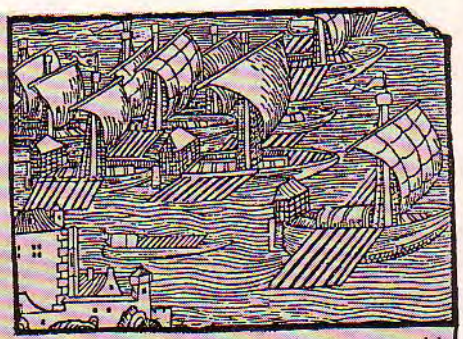
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind.
The Tempest (Act IV, scene I)

When a major trading route crosses another, merchants soon gather. When one of those routes is a river then villages and eventually towns swiftly grow. Such a town grew here. From early times the merchants formed guilds and sects and appointed a Clerk-at-Arms to organise their well being and protection. The Clerk, and after him his son and then his son's son, performed his duties excellently and caused the town to prosper and grow into a city.

Time passed.

The city thrived in amazing fashion. Subsidiary towns were formed on the city's borders; villages appeared near those towns. Trade and industry flourished, turning what was once just one city into a group of cities cooperating and trading under the eye of the Clerk and his increasing bureaucracy. This vast edifice is now a full league and more across. And as the city grew so the post of Clerk grew with it. The Clerk became the heriditary ruler of this League of Cities, named after both its nature and its size. He also acquired a new name — unable to cope with his (by now) lengthy title, the people referred to him simply as 'The Katar'. The Katars accumulated fantastic wealth and built themselves 'The Punctilio' — a stupendous palace in which courtliness and etiquette became the norm.

Outside, the League also grew. Its byzantine bureaucracy was unable to prevent trade from flourishing in relative calm and security, so attracting merchants of all races and beliefs. Today the League of Cities is a unique pot-pourri of cultures and styles. Cities and subcities jostle cheek-by-jowl with each other; the whole being lorded over by the grandly titled Knight Puissant, Clerk-at-Arms, First Servant of the City League, his vizier and his court. Order is kept by the ubiquitous Knights Ocular, who watch and report and punish on behalf of the bureaucracy — a bureaucracy where anything can happen, given time.



What of names? No single name could stand the strain of being stretched over the unimaginable size of the place. Within the League lie Punctilio, the courtly centre; The Hill, a community that grew around Punctilio; the Capitol, seat of the largest library in this part of the world; the Temple of Ten Thousand Ravens, where the Redemptors administer city justice; Docklands, a bustling riverside community; The Borough, thick with streets of commerce; the New City, now centuries old, with wide avenues choked with the detritus of periodic riot; and the streets of the Communities, the southern reaches peopled from far and wide.

Names? The inhabitants call it t'League.

Felix Pursuivant,
First Assistant to the Junior Herald

Next Issue:

Just within one of the great city gates lies the Square of Westmeet; a welcome haven for the returning adventurer, a source of rumours, a place to recover from injury and to get rid of those burdensome coins....
Full details on buildings, NPCs and links to forthcoming parts of the city, ready for you to cut out and store in a ring-binder for instant recall, with stats for both the D&D and AD&D games, and a quick reference system for that happy time in the future when we've published so much of the city that even we've got lost.....

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. . . . which is surrounded by trees. You see a pool of sparkling water and bend to drink some. As you drink, you hear an ominous rustle coming from the bushes behind you. Looking at the pool you notice something — *YOU CANNOT SEE YOUR REFLECTION!!*

The beating of your heart grows louder and faster. You must do something — but what?

Will you —

a) Dive into the Pool? (Turn to page 18)

b) Draw your weapon and turn to face the direction the sound came from? (Turn to page 44)

c) Faint? (Turn to page 50)

Turn to the page indicated in one of the above options to find the results of your decision.

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The Priests of Aphor

new fiction with an eastern flavour by Robert P Scott

Qu'al Corcoran Quaran got off his knees after crawling the requisite distance to the Sultan's throne. Nodding his head in the manner required by statute, he waited to hear the reason for his urgent summons to the Sultan's presence. The throne room was a massive, pillared chamber, studded with armoured guards who stood like statues on the marble floor. Behind the throne stood the Seven Sedulous Sages, renowned throughout the city for their stupidity and their sycophancy. They craned threateningly at Corcoran while their master turned his gaze and signalled him to speak.

By Soard, thought Corcoran, his sour pig-face never changes.

'My Lord', he said, as decorum demanded, 'Your radiance is golden, and fills the world'.

The Sultan, his due received, jerked a hand into sight and the familiar nasal whine demanded, 'Corcoran, what is this?'

Momentarily bemused, Corcoran saw a glint in the fat mit of his revered Majesty. Fighting the urge to sarcasm he replied 'A coin, Your Worthiness'.

'Yes', came the carping reply, 'But when is a coin not a coin, eh, eh?'

By the Demons, thought Corcoran, we are at riddles now! 'Tis beyond me, Liege.'

'When it's a fake, Corcoran, eh, eh! When it's a base forgery!' The Sultan turned to leer at the advisers, to ensure an audience for his wit. Seven loathsome heads grinned and wagged.

'I see', said Corcoran, wanting any better reply.

'You see! You see! You didn't see soon enough! Eh! Eh! What are your duties, eh? Your duties are to police the market-places, to stop such nonsense! How much are you paid, eh, eh? Too much. Ha!'

'My Liege, I cannot be everywhere. Only last moon I caught a smuggling gang...'

'You will be everywhere, Corcoran, if you fail to stop this foul racket. You'll be ripped apart between horses. Ha!' The paid audience snickered dutifully. 'All my precautions, all my Watchmen, and some genius is passing false coinage.' He stopped to draw breath and held the coin up to the light from high windows, gazing at it. 'Fiendishly clever!' he muttered, 'Devilish!'

There was a long pause. Corcoran wondered what to say now. A snaking finger darted from among fourteen agitated arms and prodded the Sultan from his rapture.

'Yes, yes, the coins.' He looked at Corcoran again. 'Stop it, Corcoran, see?' He offered the coin. ''Fore it ruins me taxes. See this, eh? It's my head on the coins, see? It'll be your head if it don't stop, Ha!' He lobbed the coin at Corcoran.

'Take it. Take this box.' A member of the septet scurried round the throne with a small chest. 'It's full of them, all denominations, all taken from me tax collection. Stop it! Eh!'

Corcoran walked from the audience fingering the heavy coin and brooding on the virtues of simplicity. The Sultan's elaborate plans to counter forgery were based on the usual forger's approach of Alchemy and sorcery. The occult art could easily magic base metal into gold. Temporarily. But the beauty of these coins was the absence of any magic; the Sultan's test of dubious coinage was to examine a random sample for magical dweomer.

He laughed as he left the palace, the chest under his arm. The Sultan had the vicious cunning of a cornered rat, but the wit of a hare in March. He despised the Sultan, and this grubby city of thieves. He was Qu'al Corcoran Quaran, who had vanquished terrible foes. He was Corcoran who had won the Opal Blade, a sword above swords.

It was only the loss of his closest comrades in finding the sword that had turned him from the knife edge life to take this sedentary job, acting as jackal to a poncing vulture. But now, assuming he could keep his head where it belonged, he would not tarry long at the Pig's service.

To trace the forger would be as simple as tracing a coin to its origin. Simple, but about as easy as following a jittering firefly. There was no telling how many grubby hands had fingered each grubby coin on its route to the tax-box. But it had been a collection from peasants, which was some mercy, as such would not easily forget the most valuable coins. He had but two Imperial 5-piece bits, more than a week's wage for the best artisan. They would be a good place to start.

The tax-collector looked like a lizard, perched behind a massive desk. 'Can't do it,' he said. 'You can't have it. Tax records is secret. Go away!'

'Will do it,' said Corcoran, drawing the Opal Blade significantly. 'My head depends on this, and now so does yours.' He laid the tip of the blade to the collector's throat. 'I'll say nought, if thee'll say nought.'

The collector blinked at the length of cold steel, transfixed. He scrambled a scroll from a drawer. 'Here! Here! Be quick!' From the scroll Corcoran found the name of the two who had paid 5-piece bits, together with their change against what they owed.

He left the collector to recover his composure, and went in search of Skena the Belly Dancer (those of such dubious trades were counted amongst the peasants), and Jasta the Woodman.

He found Jasta first. The woodman had got his coin from his son, who had got it from Bogus the Mage as one year's (back-paid) wages for acting as apprentice. Bogus insisted that he got the coin from Fungil the Fishman, for cursing an enemy. Fungil had received it from Lurg the Dung-cart man, who had purchased fish. It was said that the only meal Lurg could smell was fish. Lurg said that he got the coin from Adal the Inn-keeper, when he had finally demanded money owed to him for his carting, else the unsavoury refuse would remain. Adal said that he got the coin from a beggar, who had surprisingly arrived at the inn demanding a week of luxury, and paying with the coin (in advance).

The beggar, who was still in the inn, and still struggling to believe his good fortune, swore blind that he had got the coin from two wandering Priests of Aphor who had scattered money like seed in Slum Lane. And here the trail went cold. The Priests of Aphor were regarded as dangerously insane by most men, but worshipped by the very poor. They spent their lives wandering the earth, following the example of their deity, Aphor. Aphor was said to have lived long ago, a nobleman of holy powers who gave all to the poor. And it was said that when his all had been given, Aphor's holy Poor-Box had gone on miraculously producing money from its depths to give to the poor.

His followers begged alms from the rich, or earned fees as arbiters and Holy Men, and gave all they got to Aphor's eternal flock. Corcoran balked at the prospect of finding the Priests, or getting a sensible lead from them even if he found them, and decided it would be much more pleasant to find Skena the Belly Dancer.

Corcoran knocked politely at the door, and entered when a voice called to do so. Skena was a slim, dark-haired beauty, and he guessed her origins lay to the north from her accent. She was seated at a mirror, combing her long hair.

'Good morrow, good Sir, what want you here?'

'Merely a question answered, my Lady.'

'My Lady, indeed,' queried Skena. 'And what means you by that, Sir. Do you wish to imply me a lady of the night, for as you see, no noble born am I?'

'Lady I call as Lady I see,' said Corcoran. 'I have seen some noble-born pigs. For your beauty and your wit, I call you Lady.'

Skena was visibly impressed, which pleased Corcoran, who was finding pleasure mixing with business.

'Handsome says as handsome looks. Wine?' She asked.

'Nay, I thank you. Were I not dutiful and on duty, though, I would not refuse.'

'My, my. And what does a handsome paragon as thee do here?'

'This coin, my Lady,' said Corcoran, producing the 5-piece bit, 'Was paid by you to the tax-box, and I needs must know whence you got it.'

'The coin I got from Aphil, my room-mate, who is a lady of the night, but no disrespect meant. She's a nice girl. I have my skill, and she hers. I dance.' A twinkle lit her eye. 'Would you like to see me dance. Sir Inquisitor?'

'Once again,' said Corcoran, with genuine regret, 'Were I not dutiful and on duty I would not miss such a pleasure. However, I would know why you were paid the coin.' She seemed unperturbed by his questioning.

'I was paid it as half the rent for a month on our rooms. Having already paid the landlord, I used it as you know for the Tax-box. Perhaps we could meet some time when dutifulness can rest, but then I forget, alas, that I leave this poxy town this afternoon.'

'Alas indeed,' said Corcoran, beginning to wonder if the girl was guilty and plotting escape. But he found no reason to distrust her. 'I, too, tire of this cess-pit place,' he said. 'Tell me, where are you bound?'

'I go north, back to home towns, less greasy and crowded.'

'Perhaps I too may travel northwards, for I too have roots there,' Corcoran mused.

'Ride swiftly then, Sirrah, and mayhap catch me. I would sleep sounder on the road with your protection.'

The conversation continued in a pleasant tone, and Corcoran found no obvious lies in the girl's story. The journey north began to seem even more appealing. He explained his interest in the 5-piece bit, and he and Skena woke Aphil from her sleep in a second room.

Like Skena, Corcoran bore Aphil no grudges for her trade. Aphil seemed more embarrassed by the questions than might have been expected, though. Eventually, after much coaxing, she confided that the coin had been given to her by an urchin. Having found the nerve to make this admission, she warmed to her own defence.

'Well, he wanted a tumble, and who am I to select me custom? Being young and wanting also some sense, he paid five times the common rate.'

Corcoran laughed with Skena, and a disgruntled Aphil was persuaded to describe the urchin, a sandy-haired ruffian, who haunted Dock Street.

'Well, good Ladies,' said Corcoran, 'He may have paid well, but then I should say the price was deserved. I must go about my business now.' He walked past Skena. 'And mayhap we shall meet upon the road.'

Corcoran found the urchin, as he was told, in Dock Street. It took many threats and much haranguing to get a confession that the coin had been stolen from a basement window two streets away. Delighted with his luck, Corcoran let the waif go, wishing only that he had stolen for bread. The boy was nearly grown and Corcoran told him to have a worthwhile trade next time he saw him.

'Stop the forgers, Corcoran, see?' He offered the coin.
'See this, eh? It's my head on the coins, see?
It'll be your head if it don't stop, Ha!'

With that he ran to the building the boy had described. As he crouched at the basement window he heard whispers and a banging noise, and saw the shadow of two figures hard at work. A small pile of coins sat, still steaming, on the window ledge.

He drew the Opal Blade, crashed through the door, and down a flight of steps. At the bottom two men in tatty brown robes screamed with surprise. One reached for a hammer on the floor, while the other waved his arm and yelled 'I am a mighty Warlock! Back! Or I turn you to stone!'

Not at all impressed by the 'warlock', Corcoran gave him a slash with his sword just in case. By this time the hammer was raised and swinging down at him. He sidestepped it and stabbed the wielder in the shoulder.

Still on guard, Corcoran saw his assailants slump back into a corner, clutching wounds and whimpering 'Aphor preserve us, Aphor preserve us'. From this, and their symbol of a silver chest hung from their necks, Corcoran realised that he had accidentally found the Priests of Aphor. And a deeper realisation began to form in his mind.

A little later, a toothless Priest of Aphor concluded his tale. Both he and his companion were bandaged and calmed.

'So you see, we only follow the master. Great Aphor produced gold for the poor, and so did we. We meant no harm. We melted the metal down here, mixed in tinctures to colour the coin, and banged it into shape with our moulds.'

Corcoran found it hard to take this business seriously. Toothless and his disciple seemed so guileless and comically plausible. 'Harm or not intended,' he said, 'It is my duty to take you to the Sultan, and his wrath is great.' The Priests paled visibly and began to shuffle in an agitated manner. Corcoran couldn't go through with it. He drew a breath and gestured the Priests to calm down.

continued on page 18

COMPETITION RESULTS

Philosopher's Stone: The Cleric

One notable thing about the last batch of competition entries was the large number from people who only started reading IMAGINE magazine at issue 12. Moreover, three of the four prizes were won by people who did not do noticeably well if they did enter any previous competition.

There were over 50 entries to this competition, including, unfortunately, 13 that arrived after 8 May. It seemed harsh to reject these, especially as some were post-marked as early as 1-3 May, but we decided to let fate (or the GPO) be the arbitrator.

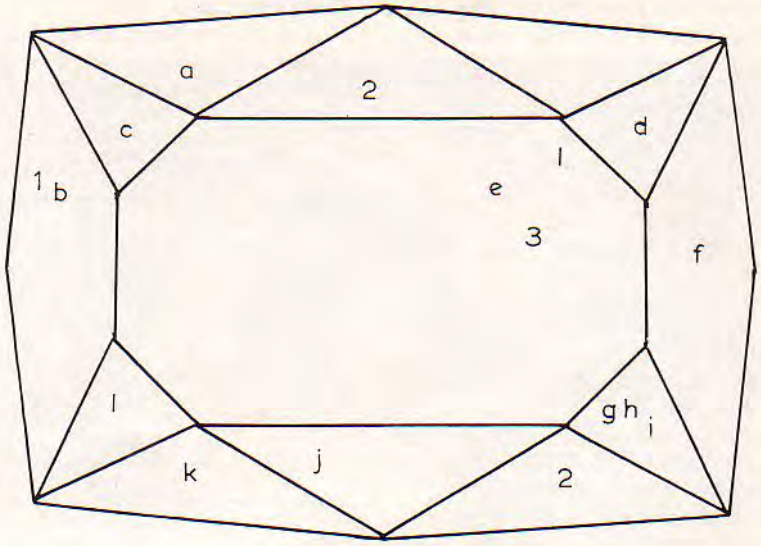
Of the entries accepted, we managed to eliminate all but 7 for some little quibble or other; then the tie-breaker had to be called upon. To be honest there was no obvious winner this time, but we chose **Andrew Buxton** of Alcester, Warks for the £40 prize, and **Jeff Bird** of Forres, Morayshire, **M Probert** of Sambourne, Warks and **Philip Edwards** of Long Crendon, Bucks for the £10 prizes. Commiserations to Julian Murgatroyd, David Parker and Clifford Moore for coming so near and yet...

Commiserations also to the people who came close to winning the 'overall' prize competition, particularly John Allen who came second, without having won one of the 'heats' — mainly due to mistakes in the main answers. We are sending him a consolation prize. As for the winner — well, that would be telling! You have to work it out for yourself, from the prize picture opposite. This one's just for fun; no prizes for solving the puzzles — though maybe I should warn you that it uses codes from the four competitions, so you may find it difficult if you haven't got the relevant issues of the magazine. Congratulations to the winner — we wish there could be prizes for everyone who made a good effort; hope you enjoyed it.

Now for the answers to part 4. It obviously wasn't difficult, with most people getting most of the messages, but for the others...

1. The key clue to the main answers was easy to find. Taking the initials of the book titles (**a**) in order, you could learn: **THE COMPASS POINTS ALIGNMENT, THE SCROLL MY NAME, THE SAIL MY PU(R)POSE, AND ALL ELSE IS GAME.** Looking, therefore, to the scroll, you can see that the spells are spelt wrongly. The correct letter in each case spells **MY NAME IS OSWALD T(H)E UNGRATEFUL.** The bracketed letter in each case was missing — just to keep you on your toes! The first 'T' and the 'R' were omitted altogether, rather than replaced.

2. The compass shows 26 points distinguished by a lighter background than the rest. The compass points listed on the scroll then spell **If thou be righteous the LORD shall spare thee, if thou be sinful the LAW shall cast thee down,** indicating a **LAWFUL GOOD** alignment.



3. The 'cogsail' shows a cog with a pointer — rotating it clockwise, taking each letter as it is pointed to, gives **FIX THY EYES ON ME AND BEHOLD THY DESTRUCTION *DEMON ASUERAS***

4. Other messages were:

b The wrong letters in the misspelt spells give you **FIVE OUT OF TEN MUST TRY HARDER X X X.** In the two places where a letter was omitted altogether, it appeared in both messages.

c PICK UP A PENGUIN backwards.

d The flags on the inset mean **Stop carrying out intentions and watch for my signals; I require medical assistance; I require a pilot;** and **No.**

e The flags on the main picture mean **I am taking on board or discharging explosives** and **My engines are going full astern.**

f AVAST THERE LANDLUBBER in 'revolving' letters on mast.

g On the necklace, in capitals **SIXTEEN MEN ON A DEAD MAN'S CHEST YO HO HO AND A BOTTLE OF RUM,**

h in lower case, reversed order: **I bet you always read the endings of books first**

i and in block capitals, AR JIM LAD.

j The 'lightning' spells **NO CHANCE.**

k The numbers on the sextant read **TOO SIMPLE.**

l The sums show the symbols for addition, subtraction, division and multiplication on the main picture, which then spells: **ROSES ARE RED, VIOLETS ARE BLUE, YOU THINK YOU'RE CLEVER BUT YOU HAVEN'T A CLUE.**

Andrew's tie-breaker was not markedly different from the others; it was fairly unambiguous what was going on in the story for once. But here it is:

The narrator was an adventurer with few scruples and even less courage. After selling a map, which he discovered on his only adventure and did not dare follow, he realised that there was an easier way to make money than adventuring. So he now makes copies of the original map and sells them to likely adventurers.

The adversary is a demon dragon of the ancient world and hence has all the normal powers of dragons. His main power, though, lies in his vessel which is semi-sentient and is powered by his mind. The ship may ram enemy ships with the blades on its prow, or fire bolts of pure energy from a glowing orb in its stern. While in this vessel the adversary can control water, causing it to boil and swamp other ships. Also he has the power to summon any number of normal dragons to his aid.

Finally, a few tips for future competitions. First, be sure to include your name and address: you would be surprised how many people forget. Write it on the entry itself: overseas readers in particular tend to write their address on the envelope only, which has been discarded by the time the letter reaches us. If you have comments or questions on other matters, put them on a separate piece of paper, or your entry might go to the other department and miss the competition. Set the answers out clearly, with the explanation *after* the solution. It helps in a cumulative competition like this if your entries are distinctive, so that they are memorable if you do well. And don't forget to allow lots of time for delivery!

Have fun solving the puzzle opposite — but **don't** send your answers to us!

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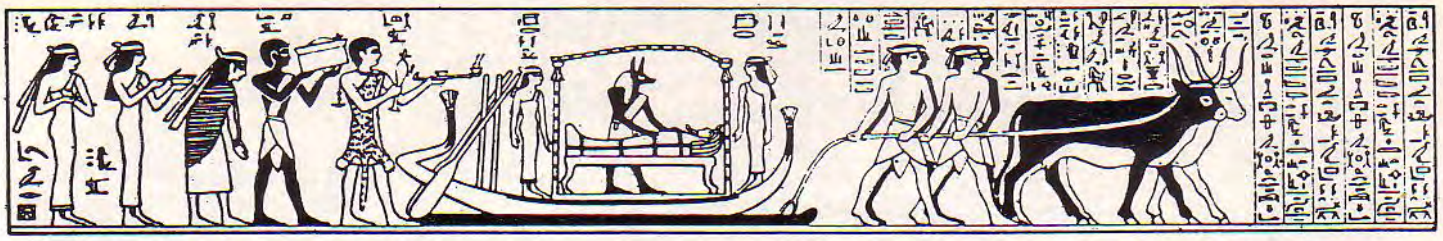


THE MAGIC OF ANCIENT EGYPT

by Rod Stevenson

In the history of virtually every nation to date, there has been at some time or other a belief that through certain rituals and ceremonies men could perform feats that would have been impossible otherwise. These acts known as magic were on the whole drawn from 'The Power of the Gods'. So what, you may ask, makes the magic of the Ancient Egyptians any different to, say, that of the Incas?

The main difference lies in its basic purpose. Most other forms of magic were used to protect the caster from evil spirits, daemons and the like or to cause harm to some other human being. So it was with the Egyptians, but they alone also used their magic to gain control of their respective gods.

There were two forms of Egyptian magic:

1) That which used the spoken word, through the proper words of power.

2) Magical ceremonies which included the use of Stones, Amulets, figures etc.

Proof of the amazing power of these ancient magicians comes from, of all people, the Hebrews (normally their most severe critics), for in the famous sorcerous duels between Moses and the Egyptian priests, the Egyptians were almost as skilled as Moses. Perhaps this is not hard to believe since, according to the Bible, Moses was 'learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,' and 'was mighty in words and in deeds,' and there are many stories that suggest he had knowledge of the many practices involved in Egyptian magic. The phrase 'mighty in words' probably means that he uttered the words of power with the correct pronunciation. The turning of a serpent into what is apparently an inanimate, wooden stick was just one of the many 'miracles' he performed. It can be seen that many of the Egyptian spells closely resemble those used in the **D&D®** game rules today, and many campaigns could quite easily be given an Egyptian flavour without the need to introduce much new material into the game.

If a mortal knew the true name of a god, and called him by it, he was bound to answer and do as bidden.

Magical Stones and Amulets

The word Amulet comes from an Arabic root meaning 'to bear, to carry'. The name now applies to any talisman with supernatural powers which is worn or carried.

It is not clear whether amulets were first used on living or dead bodies but it is thought that they were originally intended to protect the owner from savage animals and snakes. The powers that the Egyptians ascribed to amulets increased as religious ideas and beliefs developed. Eventually each part of the body had its own particular amulet, and specific wards were used for such things as snakes, mildew, decay, worms and putrifaction (these guards were for the dead body) so that the sarcophagus of a member of an Egyptian noble family or the like could become quite an amulet warehouse.

Just when these amulets were first used cannot be said but it is certain that amulets represent beliefs so ancient that even the Egyptians were doubtful of their origin. One further and possibly most important function (to the Egyptians at least) was the inscription upon tomb, stele, coffin etc used to bring the Gods under the power of the deceased, so that they might compel the immortals to do their will.

Here are a few descriptions of important amulets.

The Amulet of the Two Fingers

This amulet, was intended to represent the two fingers which the God Horus (God of the Sky) used when helping his father Osiris (God of the Underworld) up a ladder into heaven. It is found on the interior of mummies and is usually made of obsidian or haematite.

The Amulet of the Collar of Gold

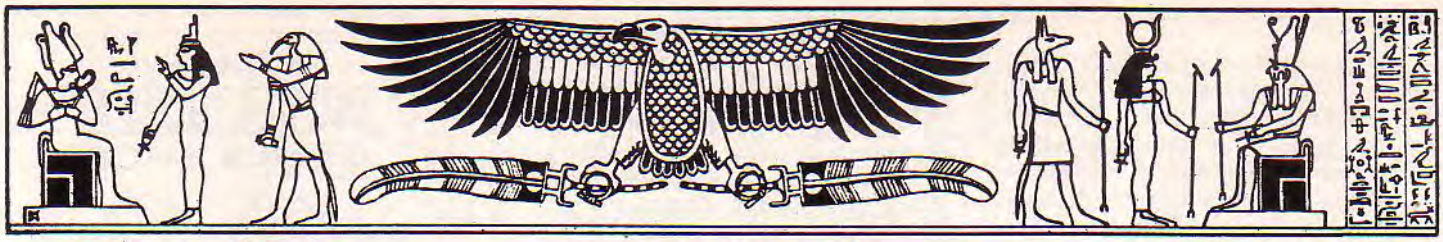
This amulet was designed to help the mummy free itself from the swathings. This amulet is very rare and appears to be part of a belief which grew up around 550bc (XXVIth dynasty).

The Amulet of the Vulture

This talisman was intended to cause the power of Isis as the "Divine Mother" to be a protection for the deceased. It would be placed upon the body on the day of the funeral while certain words of power were recited over it.

The Amulet of the Papyrus Sceptre

This amulet was made of mother of emerald and gave the deceased renewed vigour and youth. After the words of power had been recited over it, it would be placed around the neck on the day of the funeral.



Magical Names

Egyptians and the people of many other Oriental nations held the belief that if the true name of any being were known and used by someone, that person could gain absolute control of the being — whether it was a mortal or a mighty demon or even one of the gods themselves. Naturally these names were carefully kept secret, although they could sometimes be found by certain rituals (if these were known).

In one instance the Goddess Isis caused a snake to bite Ra, and make him very ill. Isis was powerless to do as she wished in heaven and earth until she persuaded the God to reveal to her the name by which he ruled the universe, thus placing himself in her power. For mortals the same applied; if someone knew the true name of a God or Devil and called him by it, using the proper tone of voice as well as enacting any necessary rituals, he was bound to answer and do as bidden.

To the Egyptian the true name was as much a part of one as the soul and it is quite certain that this view was held since the earliest of times. Without a name one could not be identified in the judgement (the first stop along the road to the underworld) and since mortals only came into being on earth when their name had been pronounced by the God Ra, so a future life could only be attained after the Gods knew of and uttered those names.

Magical Spells, Formulae, etc

The words of power or 'hekau' could only be of use if they were spoken by a qualified person, phrased correctly, and in the proper tone of voice, though they could also be written upon sheets of papyrus. Besides this, the Egyptians believed in the power of representations of the gods and divine beings, as long as the same duly qualified master spoke the appropriate hekau over them. In the light of this fact, seemingly childish rituals have some measure of importance. The early tombs are seen to have many scenes painted within, mostly of the deceased carrying out various rituals. These are not just there for decoration, for the Egyptians believed that these scenes of the deceased offering gifts to certain gods and goddesses would turn into reality.

Magical Figures

Magical figures were one of the most-used types of artifact in ancient Egypt; the Egyptians believed that it was possible to transmit to the figures of any man, women or living creature the soul of the beings they represented, together with all their qualities and attributes. The statue of a God in a temple contained part (or a different form) of the spirit of that particular God, and from Egypt's earliest history her people believed every figure and statue had its own spirit.

Later, even when Egypt had been Christianised, worshippers made attacks on the idols of heathens, showing that they still possessed this belief. They constantly tried to throw down the statues of the Gods of the Greeks and Romans thinking that they would thereby destroy the spirit which dwelt within (rendering it homeless and powerless).

In the Apocryphal Gospels it is stated that when the virgin Mary and her Son came to Egypt there 'was a movement and quaking throughout the land, and all the idols fell down from their pedestals and were broken in pieces'. The Priests of Egypt consulted an oracle about the earthquake and were told that the footstep of the son of the 'secret and hidden God' had come to Egypt. They immediately set about building a figure of this God, accepting that this strange new God was stronger than all the rest of their own together. But the sly Egyptians thought that by building the statue they would compel at least a portion of this God to dwell within the statue. Whether or not they were then going to cast down this statue when they felt the spirit was dwelling within is uncertain as no record of this exists.

The Worship of Animals

This part of the Egyptians' culture and religion has been most misunderstood. They believed that their gods could and did take the form of many different animals. This is the basic idea of so called 'Egyptian animal worship', which first caused the ridicule of the cultured Greeks and later the abuse of the early Christian writers. But as with most things, when studied closely the apparent stupidity disappears. To start with, the Egyptians revered certain animals they thought possessed attributes of the Gods to whom they were sacred. The Egyptians never worshipped an animal as that animal but as the incarnation of the God it was akin to. Whatever your feelings on the truth of the magical abilities of the Egyptians, there can no doubting they were a truly remarkable race. Just consider: they were practising their complex rituals while we Europeans were scuttling around in our cosy little caves!

Rod Stevenson

The Priests of Aphor

continued from page 13

'The punishment for forgery,' he said, 'Is at least the loss of a hand.' The second Priest screamed. 'However, I see you, Old One, with a gash on your face to the bone; and you, Whimperer, with a hole in you shoulder. I think that equates to roughly a lost hand each, providing I have your holy word to quit this city and behave.'

Two shaven heads nodded like trees in a high wind.

Corcoran spent the rest of the day smashing the Priests' moulds and machinery. They were hours gone when he hailed a Watchman and sent word to the Sultan as to where the remains of the 'fiendish' racket could be found. He also sent a curt resignation.

Corcoran cleared the city gates and breathed fresh air. He felt young again, and ready for more adventure. To the east lay the city, to the south more cities of the same ilk. To the west lay distant, appealing mountains, to the north homelands and the hope of catching Skena. He pondered.

The grateful Priests of Aphor had pressed a coin on him, stressing that it was a luck-penny. Corcoran took out the coin examined it. 'Heads I go north,' he said, and flipped the coin.

'Heads,' he said, and laughed.

He put the double-sided coin back in his pouch, and spurred his horse to gallop northwards.

Robert P Scott

a) The liquid envelops you and you are drawn downwards until eventually you are confronted by a beautiful mermaid reading a book. As you approach, entranced by her beauty, you notice that the book is called **The Gamesmen of Kazar,** one of the many solo adventures available with **Tunnels & Trolls** role-playing system.

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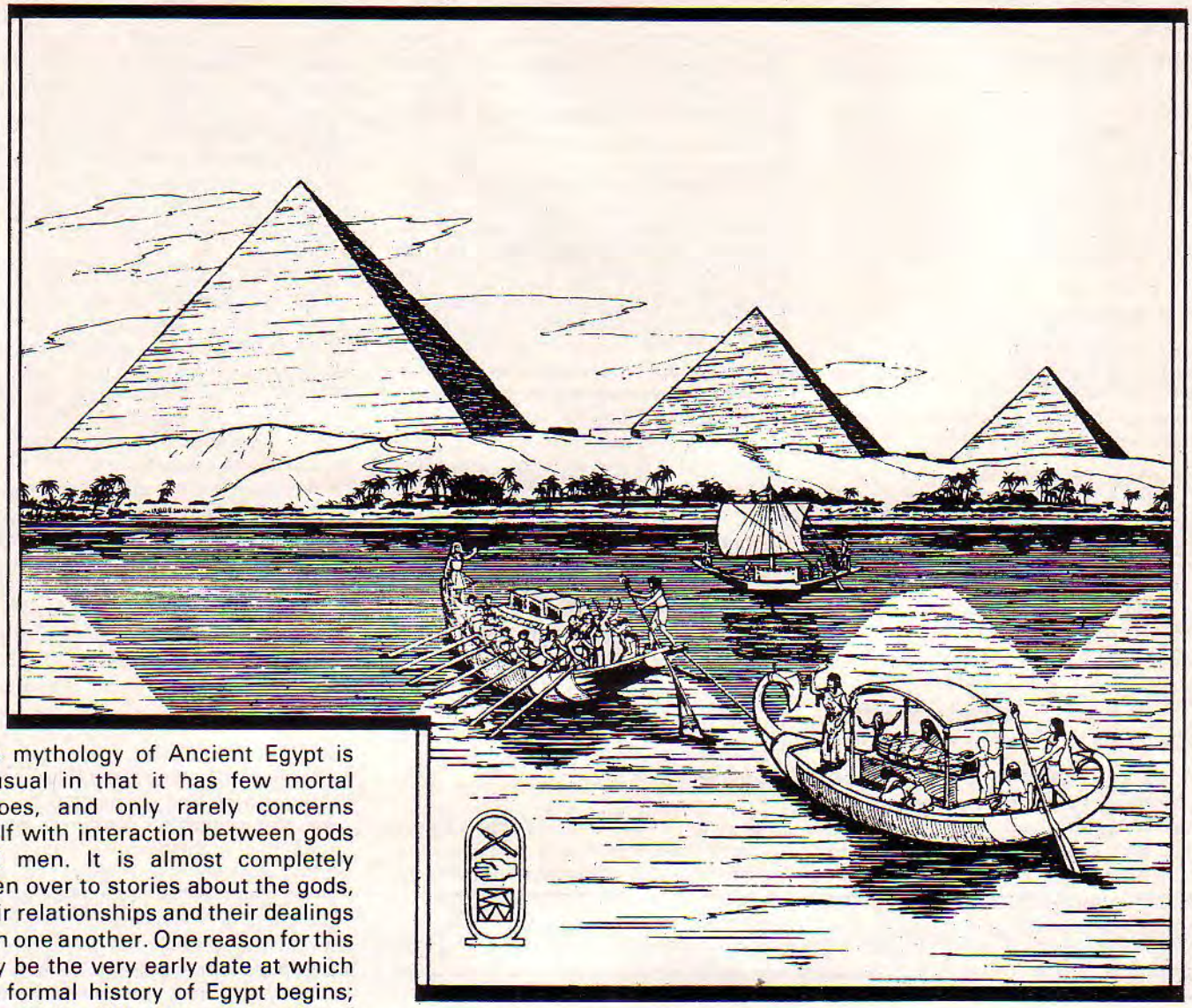
THE MYTHOLOGY OF ANCIENT EGYPT

A Brief Survey
by Graeme Davis



The mythology of Ancient Egypt is unusual in that it has few mortal heroes, and only rarely concerns itself with interaction between gods and men. It is almost completely given over to stories about the gods, their relationships and their dealings with one another. One reason for this may be the very early date at which the formal history of Egypt begins; Menes, the first recognised ruler of the 'Two Lands' of Upper and Lower Egypt, reigned from 3188 - 3141 BC, and the predynastic period stretches far back into the Neolithic. Thus, Egypt did not have such a long 'twilight period' of quasi-historical myth and legend before the beginning of formal history as did, for instance, Greece or Ireland.

The Predominant theology over most of Egypt's history was that of Heliopolis, which is dealt with in some detail here. From time to time, however, local cults temporarily gained a more wide-spread popularity, and the picture becomes a little confused as these local deities are equated with others by various scribes in an attempt to preserve a coherent overall theology. Two of the major local cults, the Triads of Memphis and Thebes, are discussed briefly below.

The Heliopolitan Ennead and associated myths

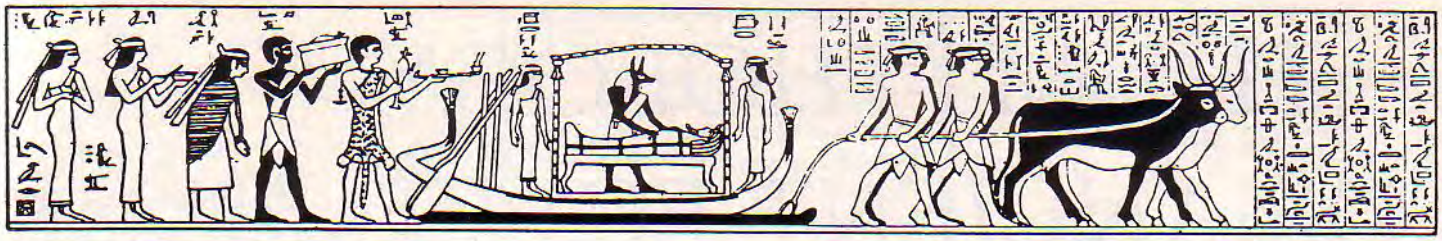
Heliopolitan mythology falls into three distinct sections. Firstly there is the **Ra Cycle**, which deals with the creation of the universe by Ra and the reigns of his immediate descendents. More or less dovetailed into this is the **Osiris-Horus Cycle**, thought by some to be later, which deals with the death and rebirth of Osiris and the struggle between Horus and Seth. This body of myth has significant historial and political undercurrents, and forms the basis for the 'classical' Egyptian attitudes to kingship and divinity as well as the consuming preoccupation with death and the afterlife. Finally, there are the more widespread **Nilotic Myths**, concerning and celebrating the river Nile, whose annual flooding supported the agricultural basis for the whole of the Egyptian economy and civilisation.

The Ra Cycle

Ra, or Re, was the first ruler of Egypt, and the creator of the world. The main centre of his worship was at Heliopolis (*Greek: the city of the Sun*) in Lower Egypt. All pharaohs from the Old Kingdom period onwards had among their titles a statement that they were the sons of Ra.

At the creation, he rose from the primordial ocean of Nun and drew order from chaos, creating first Shu and Tefnut, air and moisture. From these came Geb and Nut, earth and sky, who, according to the Osirian tradition, gave birth to Osiris and Isis, together with Seth and Nephthys. These eight deities, together with Ra, form the Ennead of Heliopolis, the core of the Egyptian pantheon.

While he remained young and strong, Ra ruled gods and men peacefully, but time took its toll and eventually his infirmity



caused even men to plot rebellion. Having summoned the other gods to a council, he determined to send forth the Eye of Ra, in the form of the goddess Hathor (before she became a woman's deity) to exact retribution. Hathor waded in blood, and the slaughter was only brought to an end when Ra poured out a flood of barley beer which had been dyed with ochre to resemble blood. Hathor saw her reflection in this by the light of the dawn, and was tempted to drink; becoming drunk, she forgot her rage and the slaughter ceased.

The ingratitude of mankind, however, had inspired in Ra a distaste for the world. He abdicated power in favour of his son Shu and Hathor raised him on her back into the heavens, where he became the sun in its present form.

One series of myths deals with the conflict between Ra and Apep (*Greek: Apophis*), the demon-serpent who appears repeatedly as an arch-enemy of the gods. Some texts maintain that Apep was killed by Ra and others that he was merely overthrown; he does, however, reappear to plague the reign of Ra's successor Shu, and was also said to attack Ra's sun-barge and thus cause eclipses.

Another, possibly later, story tells how Isis tricked the aged Ra into revealing his secret name, the source of his power, which was handed down to Horus to ensure his continued success. This myth may have originated at the time when the cult of Isis and Osiris was growing, and assimilated a great deal of earlier tradition.

The Osiris-Horus Cycle

Osiris was an early Pharaoh, the son of Geb the earth god and Nut the sky goddess and a descendant of Ra. He ruled Egypt with his sister-wife Isis, and taught the Egyptians the arts of agriculture and metal working. He was killed in the twenty-eighth year of his reign by his brother Seth, assisted by 72 conspirators. Seth displayed an ornately-worked chest at a feast, and jokingly announced that it should belong to whomever it fitted exactly. Osiris was induced to try the chest for size, and as soon as he got in Seth nailed the lid down and threw the chest into the Nile — one of Osiris' formal titles is 'The Drowned One'.

The chest drifted down the Nile and into the Mediterranean, finally coming to rest by Byblos on the Phoenician coast (probably near modern Jabayl, about 30km north of Beirut). A sycamore tree grew up around the chest and enclosed it, and the King of Byblos admired the tree and ordered it to be cut down to make a pillar for his palace. Isis, meanwhile, was searching for her husband, and at Byblos she recognised the pillar's importance and begged the King to let her take it away.

Isis brought the chest and the body of Osiris back to Egypt and hid it in the swamps of Buto on the Nile delta. Seth, however, found the body while hunting at night, and, dismembering it, scattered the pieces throughout Egypt. Isis managed to find all the pieces and reconstruct Osiris' body, with the exception of the reproductive organ, which had been devoured by the oxyrhynchid, a Nile crab forever accursed for this crime. Isis was able to resurrect Osiris with the help of her sister Nephthys, but the risen Osiris did not stay on earth, leaving to become the ruler of the 'western region' — that is to say, the underworld.

Isis returned to hiding in the swamps of Buto, having magically conceived Horus, and remained there to bring him up, using her magical powers to protect him from the wrath of Seth. As Horus grew up, he devoted himself to avenging Osiris and the vindication of his claim to the throne, and after a prolonged struggle Seth and his followers were defeated.

That is the essence of the Osiris-Horus Cycle. It had a profound effect on the Egyptian attitude to kingship and divinity, as well as life and death. The Pharaoh was equated with Horus while he lived and with Osiris when he died — he was not, as in Mesopotamia and elsewhere, thought of as a surrogate for the gods, and accorded divine status at death — he **was** the god, ruling personally over his people. The recurrent theme of the dying and reborn Osiris, together with the introduction of agriculture, also made him a vegetation god, and his departure to the underworld lies behind the Egyptian obsession with the afterlife which led to the development of mummification, the building of elaborate tombs and the mass of ritual which surrounded death.

The political implications of this cycle of myths also deserve a brief notice, and I should also like to examine the nature of Seth and his treatment in the **DEITIES & DEMIGODS™** Cyclopedia.

Seth or Set (*Greek: Typhon*) was originally a major deity of Upper Egypt, and the stories of his battles with the family of Osiris, who were deities of Lower Egypt, may reflect political tensions at the time of the unification of the kingdoms. He was not originally an evil god or a devil, but with the growing predominance of the Lower Kingdom he came to represent the harsh and arid nature of the desert in contrast to the goodness and fertility that was Osiris. In some early reliefs he is shown in a beneficent aspect with Horus, symbolising the union. It was not until the 22nd dynasty, around 1100 BC, that Seth became completely a devil and an enemy of the gods, as the cult of Osiris reached the height of its political power.

The animal with whose head Seth is commonly depicted is known as the 'Typhonic Beast', and cannot be identified with any certainty although it is thought by some to be a wild ass. Seth was supposed to have sway over the desert and its animals, especially asses, antelopes, scorpions and sometimes also crocodiles and hippopotami, but neither he nor his followers appear to have any connection with snakes, which were ruled by Apep (qv). His connection with snakes in some gaming material may have arisen from the confusion with Robert E Howard's fictional Stygian god, Set, the old Serpent. The name Seth has been used to avoid perpetuating that confusion.

The Nilotic Myths

The seasonal flooding of the Nile was vital to the agriculture upon which Egypt depended, so that it is not surprising that a great deal of mythology should revolve around the river. The importance of the Nile in the Osirian myths has already been seen, and it was also important in some parts of the Ra Cycle. The Nilotic myths, however, are not found in a single body, but permeate the whole of Egyptian mythology. The Egyptians never discarded ideas or myths, but blended and adapted earlier and sometimes opposed traditions into a synthesis, so that the Nile appears significantly in many stories but has very few which are completely its own.

The Nile was personified as the god Hapi, a fat but vigorous man dressed as a boatman or fisherman and crowned with aquatic plants. The river was thought to spring from the primordial ocean of Nun, which watered both the visible and invisible worlds, but it was also said that Hapi resided in a cavern on the isle of Bigeh near the First Cateract, whence he poured water to heaven and earth from his pitchers. Hapi does not play a major part in any Egyptian pantheon or theological system, and seems to have been no more than a deity to be placated and praised in connection with the Nile's annual flooding, almost certainly taking a minor role to Osiris and Isis even in this.

The Theban Triad

Another cycle of myths revolves around Theban triad of Amon, Mut and Khons. Amon gained importance only in the 12th Dynasty (from about 2000BC), and seems to have been initially a god of fertility. He appears as a tall, strong man with a double-plumed crown, and is also sometimes depicted with a ram's head. As the patron of a series of powerful Pharoahs, he became equated with Ra under the name Amon-Re and took on the attributes of a sun-god, although the original Ra, under the name Ra-Harakhte, carried on with his own cult. As well as being a fertility god, Amon may have been a god of wealth, as he is stated to own three-quarters of the wealth of all the other gods combined. The power of the cult of Amon-Re may be seen in the great temple complexes of Luxor and Karnak.

Amon's wife Mut was equated by the Greeks with Hera, but the only reason for this seems to have been that Amon-Re was equated with Zeus. She is a shadowy figure whose name means 'Mother', and she may have been a sky-goddess, although as Amon-Re's wife she became a minor solar deity. She is sometimes equated with Bast or the lion-headed Sekhmet since she is sometimes shown as cat-headed, but she generally appears as a woman of regal appearance wearing a heavy wig surmounted by a head-dress in the form of a vulture, the heiroglyphic depiction of her name, and the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt.

Khons, or Kenhsu, entered the Theban triad when he was adopted by the childless Mut. He seems to have been a moon god (his name means 'The Navigator' or 'He who sails across the sky'), and he appears as a royal youth wearing a skull-cap surmounted by a crescent moon. Khons does not appear to be equated with any other deity, although the moon is represented in the Heliopolitan theology by Thoth, who was delegated by Ra to shine in the darkness and to observe the covert activities of his enemies.

The Memphis Triad

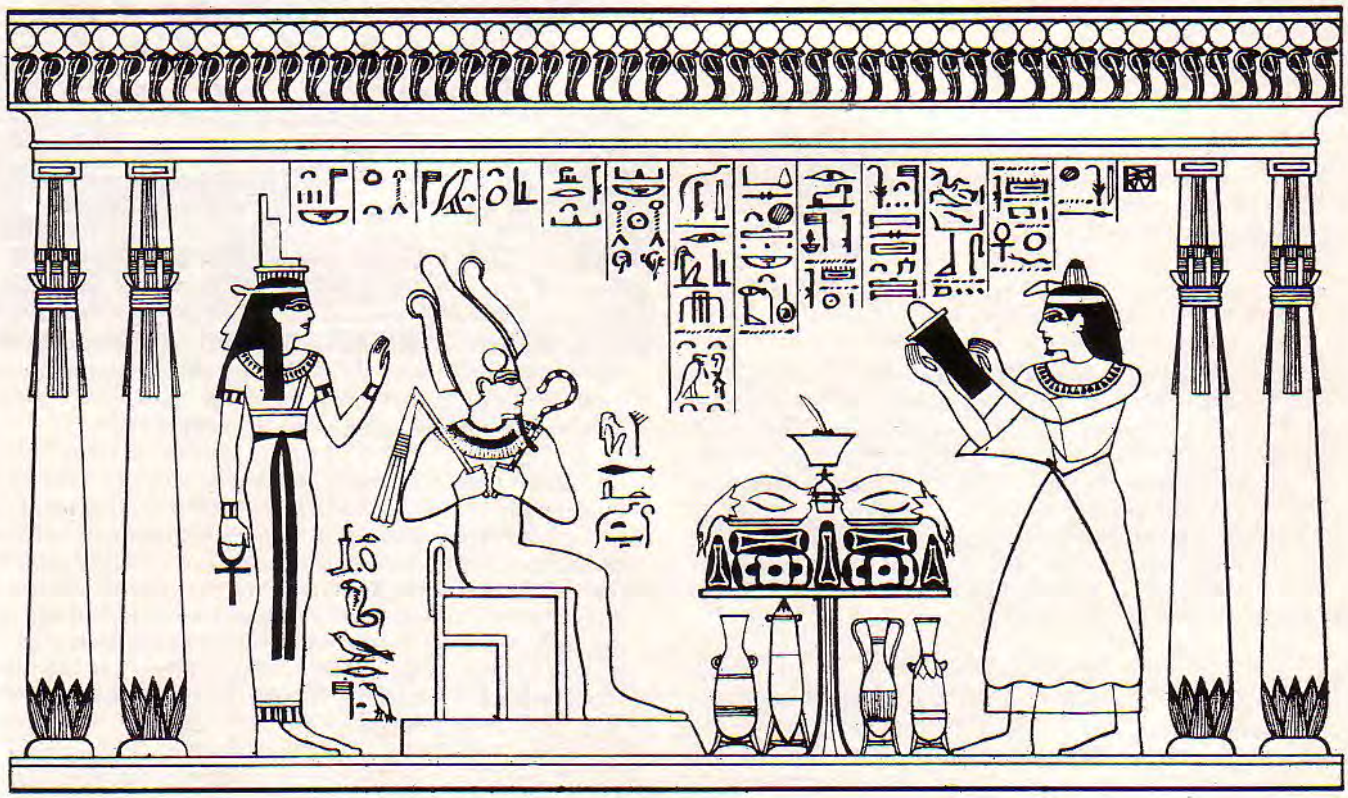
This triad consisted of Ptah, his wife Sekhmet and their son Nefertum. Ptah is normally depicted as a mummified figure like Osiris, with his hands free of the wrappings and holding a sceptre which combines the symbols of life, stability and omnipotence. He wears a tight head-band on his shaven head. His best-known aspect is that of the patron of artisans, but he is also the sovereign deity of the Memphis theology and is credited with the creation of the universe; he is said to have created Horus by his thought and Thoth by his speech, and is sometimes equated with the primordial ocean Nun, bringing the Heliopolitan Ennead into existence by his divine word. He was also sometimes equated with Seker and Osiris. Occasionally he was depicted as a deformed dwarf, as a protector against all kinds of evil; in this role he is similar to Bes, although the two gods do not seem to be connected.

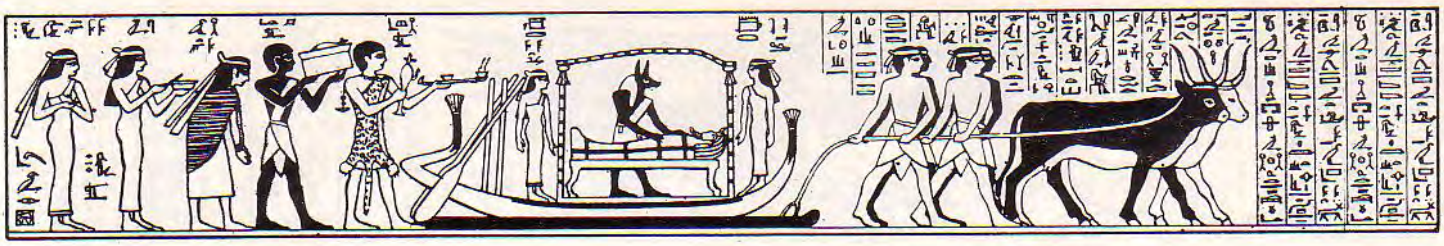
Nefertum (*Greek: Iphtimis*) is often represented as a man armed with a curved sabre-like weapon and crowned with an open lotus flower from which springs a horned stalk. He is frequently shown standing on a crouched lion, and sometimes has the lion head of his mother Sekhmet. His name means 'the young Atum', and he may have been a sun-god; Atum was a sun-god of the Helipolitan theology who became identified with Ra.

Conclusion

This short article should hopefully give the reader a rough idea of the outlines of Egyptian mythology and of the complexities involved in dealing with the various local cults. It cannot hope to present a complete list of the Egyptian deities and their various relationships and avatars, and the reader who is interested in enquiring further may find a concise account of Heliopolitan mythology in **Middle Eastern Mythology** by S H Hooke (Pelican 1981), and a detailed treatment of the various gods and cults in the **Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology**.

Graeme Davis





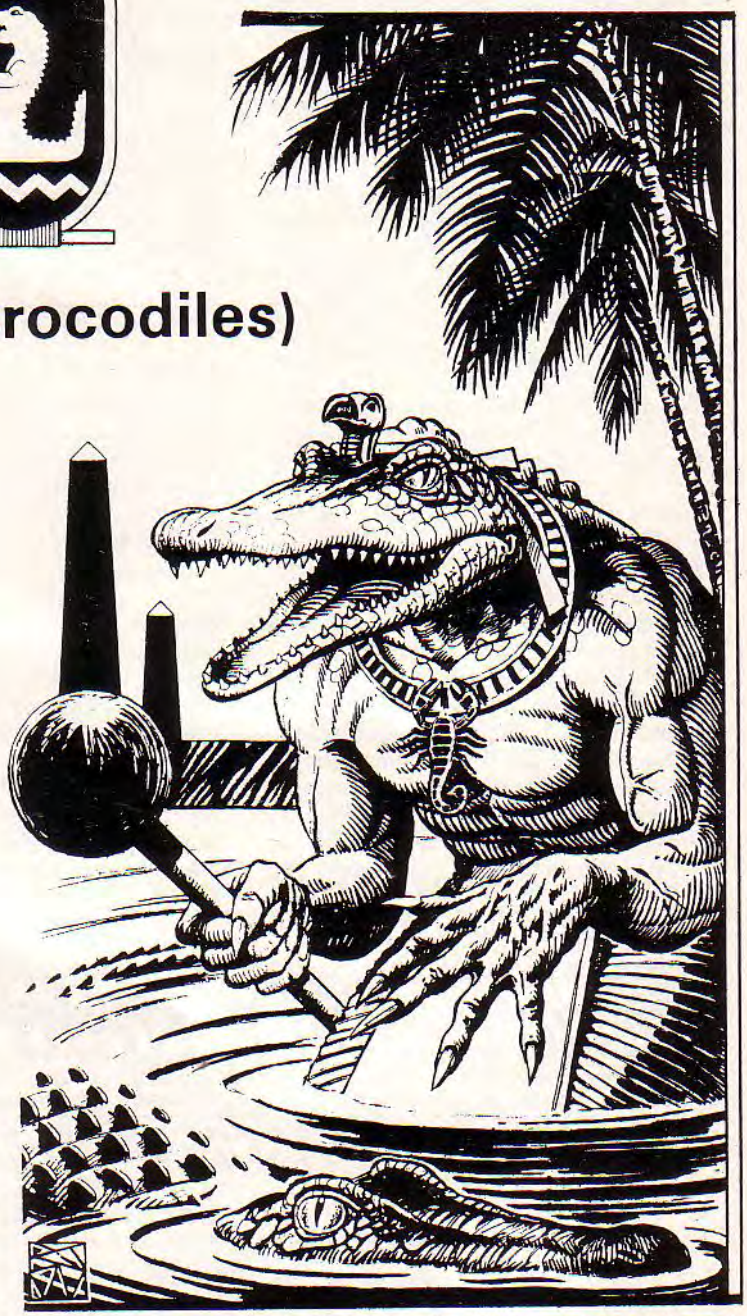
Two powerful new immortals

New Deity (unofficial)

Egyptian Mythos

SOBEK

(God of Marshes and Crocodiles)



Lesser God

Armour Class:	*-2*
Move:	*15"//18"*
Hit Points:	*300*
No. Att:	*3*
Damage/Att:	*2-20 (mace+14) or 3-30 (tail)*
	5-30 (bite)
Special Attacks:	*see below*
Special Defence:	*see below*
Magic Resistance:	*50%*
Size:	*M (7ft tall)*
Alignment:	*Neutral Evil*
Worshippers' Alignment:	*evil beings, marsh dwellers*
Symbol:	*crocodile heiroglyph*
Plane:	*Tartarus*
Cleric/Druid:	*15th level in each*
Fighter:	*17th level fighter*
MU/Illusionist:	*see below*
Thief/Assassin:	*10th level assassin*
Monk/Bard:	*nil*
Psionic Ability:	*III*
Animal:	*crocodile*
Clerics:	*M/F*
Raiment:	*head shaven, linen kilt*
Colour:	*dark green*
Holy Days:	*equinox*
Sacrifice:	*semi-annually,*
	animal, valuables or human
Place of Worship:	*temple*

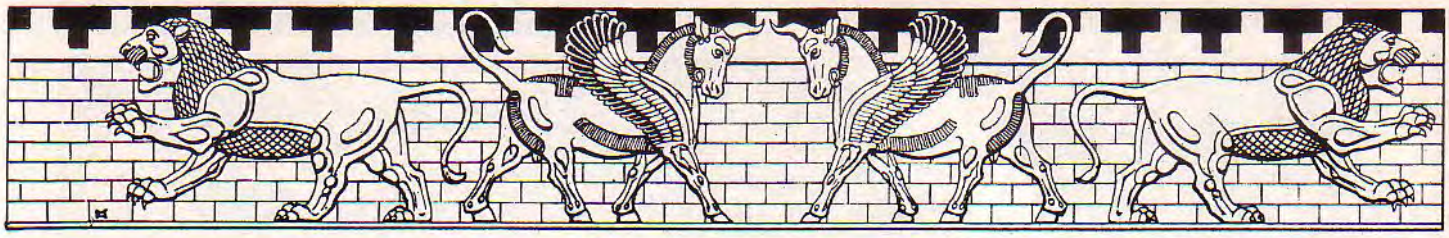
S: 25 (+7, +14) I: 22 W: 18 D: 20 C: 25 Ch: -2

Sobek (also known as Sebek or Suchos) appears as a human with the head of a crocodile, and can assume the form of a giant crocodile at will. In human form, he wields a great mace with which he can attack twice per round for 2-20 damage (d6+14). With each successful hit, the victim must save vs magic or contract a virulent swamp fever (see **DMG** p13). While in crocodile form, he can attack with a powerful tail lash for 3-30 damage. In either form he can bite with his powerful jaws for 5-30 points of damage, his bite having the effect of a **vorpal sword** on a 'natural' attack roll of 20.

Sobek can cast any water-based spell as a 20th level spellcaster, and is immune to all water magic. He can **contaminate water** (the reverse of the 5th level Druid spell **purify water**) over a 100ft radius at will, and can summon any swamp-dwelling animal once per round. In a swamp environment, he can control all swamp-dwelling creatures of semi intelligence or lower over a half-mile radius, and can create quicksands and morasses in a 50ft radius at will.

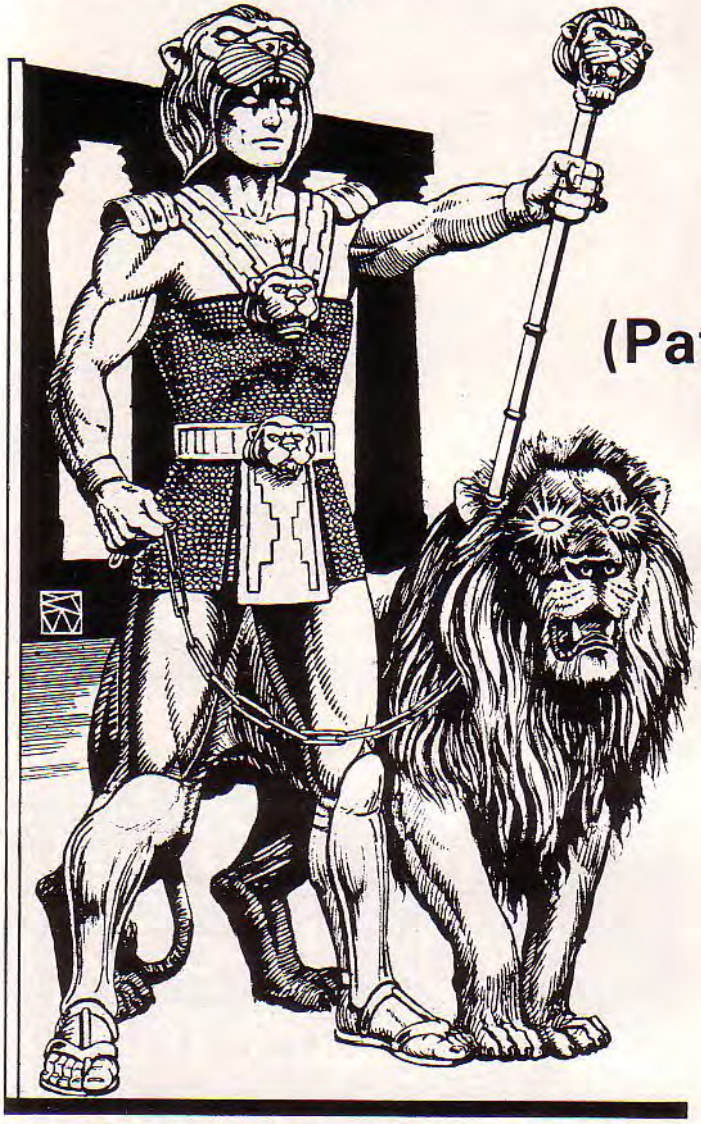
Sobek can occupy the body of any crocodile of 24 hit points or more at will, and can see and hear through the eyes and ears of any crocodile anywhere at will. His sanctuaries always contain one or more of the sacred crocodiles, worshipped as embodiments of the God, and if one of these is killed, there is a 5% chance that Sobek will notice and take some action against the slayer. 95% of the time this will involve the despatch of an **insect plague**, a poisonous snake or some other swamp-dwelling monster to kill the miscreant, but in 5% of cases Sobek will deal with the matter personally.

Graeme Davis



for the AD&D®game

New Deity (unofficial)



Persian Mythos

MITRA

(Patriach of Law and Good)

Greater God

Armour Class:	*-6*
Move:	*18"*
Hit Points:	*370*
No. Att:	*2*
Damage/Att:	*6-60*
Special Attacks:	*see below*
Special Defence:	*+3 or better to hit*
Magic Resistance:	*75%*
Size:	*M (6ft tall)*
Alignment:	*Lawful Good*
Worshippers' Alignment:	*good beings*
Symbol:	*lion's head (with topaz inset eyes and/or mouth)*
Plane:	*Seven Heavens*
Cleric/Druid:	*25th level cleric/10th level druid*
Fighter:	*20th level paladin*
MU/Illusionist:	*nil*
Thief/Assassin:	*nil*
Monk/Bard:	*nil*
Psionic Ability:	*II*

S: 24 (+6, +12) I: 23 W: 25 D: 24 C: 22 Ch: 24

This article is especially for use with Paul Jaquay's ***Dark Tower****.*

To those who have not played Paul Jaquay's fantastic adventure **Dark Tower**, the names Mitra and Set might mean little more than two of a numerable number of curses used by Robert E Howard's Conan. Having read the article on the **Egyptian Mythos** on page 19 of this magazine, the latter deity, a god of evil and the night, will now be known to you as an actual god worshipped by the some of the more ignorant Egyptian people. Although Jaquays probably followed Howard's earlier use of Mitra as an accessible foe to Set, neither author dreamed him up out of the blue. Mitra is an adaptation of the Persian god Mithras, who was identified with the sun, light and all that is truth. In Dark Tower, Mitra is a Patriarch of Law and Good, and while it says nothing of this in the old legends (Mithras was definitely benign, but to an unknown extent), Jaquays' interpretation of the god is interesting and original. Mitra, therefore, represents a new deity.

Mitra appears as a well-proportioned man in his early thirties. There is a great rivalry between him and the evil god Set, and clerics of the opposing religions will immediately seek battle with each other. Any creature dying in the service of Mitra has a 10% x (level/5) chance of being resurrected by the god in person

Though his religion thrived some three centuries ago, it is now declining because of the power of Set, whose mortal form was destroyed by Mitra when he walked the earth as a human. As a result of this encounter, Mitra also died, to be reborn as the God of Law.

In combat, Mitra emits a **protection from evil 50' radius** about his person. He uses a huge, Lawful Good aligned mace, three feet in length and made of magically enchanted gold. It has the head of a lion and topaz inset eyes and mouth. The weapon strikes for 6-60 points of damage. If the god is not in melee, he can cast two **disintegrate** spells from the eyes each round. If touched by an evil character, a saving throw vs magic must be survived, or the character will die. Even if the save is made, the character must take 3-30 points of damage. Neutral characters take 2-20 points (no save). A good character touching the mace is **blessed** (as the spell). The mace allows Mitra to **raise dead** 10/day with its touch, and acts as a +5 weapon.

In battle, Mitra wears gold chain mail, and a lion helm which acts as a **ring of protection +5**. Other artifacts named in Dark Tower include a lion ring, belt and amulet.

Graham R Drysdale

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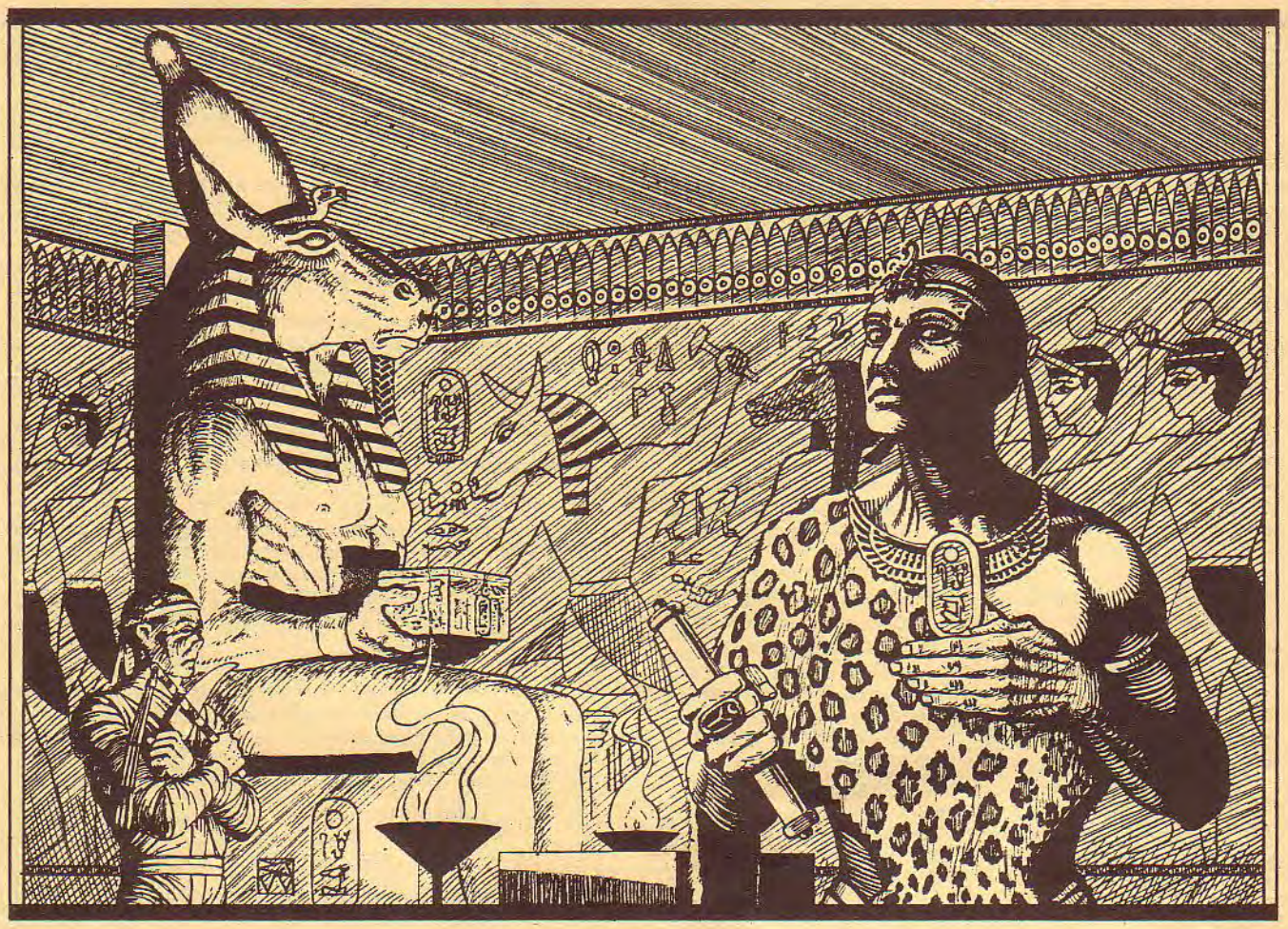
SETHOTEP

by Graeme Davis



This adventure has been designed for use with the D&D®, AD&D® and DRAGONQUEST® roleplaying game systems. It is intended for characters with some experience but who are not too powerful — in D&D and AD&D game terms, characters of 2nd - 4th levels.

If you intend to play in this adventure, please stop reading here. The rest of the information is for the Games Master (GM) alone.

The inspiration for this scenario comes from the history and mythology of Ancient Egypt. However, it is not intended to be a reconstruction of any historical or mythological event, nor to be set rigidly in any historical context. The aim has been to create a role-playing adventure with an Egyptian atmosphere. It is therefore possible to use characters who have not existed in this kind of milieu before, but who have moved into an area of a fantasy world comparable to Ancient Egypt.

Most of the adventure description consists of information which is applicable to all the game systems. Information which is specific to one system is prefaced with 'B' for the Basic DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game, 'A' for the ADVANCED D&D game or 'DQ' for the DRAGONQUEST game. Where the notation (*Spot Hidden*) appears in the text, the chance of a character noticing the feature referred to is equal to the chance of finding secret doors (B/A) or a Perception Roll with a difficulty factor of 3 (DQ rule 4.1, p5).

This mini-module is divided into four sections:
Part 1 (this section) is an introduction to the adventure, with background information for the GM and players.
Part 2 deals with the preliminary enquiries which the players may make, and leads them to the Lost Oasis.
Part 3 is the detailed key for the Lost Oasis.
Part 4 gives details of the NPCs and monsters in the adventure for the three game systems used; page 27 for the D&D game, page 30 for the AD&D game and page 32 for DQ.

Games Master's Introduction

Some of the background of this mini-module depends upon the Egyptian myths of Osiris, Horus and Seth, and the GM may find it useful to read through the article on Egyptian Mythology in this issue before running the adventure.

From the beginning of Egyptian history, Seth was the chief god of Upper Egypt — Lord of the Desert, its animals and its storms. With the unification of the Upper and Lower Kingdoms his place was usurped by Osiris of the Lower Kingdom. The ensuing struggle, while leaving Osiris dead, resulted in the destruction of Seth's temples and the scattering of his followers by those of Horus. This adventure revolves around one of Seth's followers who survived the persecutions.

This man, Sethotep (as he now called himself), hid in the desert after the destruction of the temple where he served as an acolyte, relying on the protection of Seth, Lord of the Wilderness, until he encountered and befriended a group of desert nomads. These nomads lived as bandits, preying upon merchant caravans from a stronghold in a hidden oasis.

At the oasis Sethotep found a long-forgotten and partially ruined temple to Seth and his ally Sobek, the Lord of Marshes and Crocodiles. He deciphered the heiroglyphs in the inner sanctuary of the temple and learned that the site was once a marsh where the narrow gorge sheltered the oasis. Here Sobek had concealed Seth (in the form of a crocodile) from the minions of Horus. The temple had been built by the later kings of Upper Egypt to honour their chief god and his ally.

Inspired by this great discovery, Sethotep was able to convert the nomads to the worship of Seth. Certain magical items in the temple and its tombs have enabled him to carry out daring murders in the very temples of his enemies. He has begun a campaign of terror against the Osiris-worshippers on the fringes of the desert to reinstate his god as the rightful Lord of the Upper Kingdom.

While sacking one small temple, he inadvertently discovered a hint of an important papyrus in the Temple of Thoth at Heiracopolis — a long forgotten document which may indicate the whereabouts of the true tomb of Osiris. Sethotep has recently stolen this papyrus and is working to decipher it — for with his rival's body in his power, Seth must surely be able to regain his old mastery.

Players' Introduction

Heirocopolis is not big as cities go, but then cities are few and far between, so close to the desert. Founded on the site of the final battle in which Horus defeated Seth, the city grew up around the temples and the marketplace. Here the eastern caravan route brings in spices, silks, incense and other exotic goods.

Next to the marketplace stands the Temple of Thoth, and there you have been summoned to attend the Chief Scribe and High Priest Nebertehut. A supercilious acolyte leads you through the temple precinct to the audience chamber of the High Priest, who bids you be seated and offers you refreshment.

Nebertehut is an ascetic man in late middle age, and his gaunt profile reminds you impiously of the sacred ibises that wander the temple grounds. Despite his tranquil priestly facade, it is obvious that he is deeply troubled and has not slept for some time. After bidding you welcome in the name of the Lord of Truth, he speaks as follows:

'You will, no doubt, have heard stories in the marketplace of desert bandits, raiding caravans and sacking our temples in the desert settlements. Normally bandits are no more than a nuisance for the local guard to chase back into the desert. I suspect that these raiders are more than bandits, which is why I have invited you here.

'Two nights ago, Nefer-kheb the Master Librarian was found dead on a reading bench, stung by a scorpion. Clasped in his hand was a slip of papyrus bearing one word: 'Sethotep'. This word may have two meanings — as a statement 'Seth is satisfied' or as a name 'the Approved of Seth'. Whatever it is, an abominable murder and desecration has been perpetrated — and robbery too. A section of the shelves where some of our oldest papyri are kept was disturbed, and a scroll-case left on a table held nothing.

'To our shame, we do not know what was taken, since the catalogue for that section is incomplete, but some of our earliest scrolls are said to have been written by the Lord of Truth himself, and their value is incalculable.

'That same night two other priests died by the scorpion. One was prominent in the house of Osiris, and the other was a servant of Horus. In all cases the murderer passed unseen, brazenly leaving the token of his heresy — this 'Sethotep' — to taunt us. That such holds one of our documents in the service of the vile Lord of the Waste makes me fearful, doubly so since we have no way of knowing the document's content or what may be done with it.

'But to return to the bandits. The raiders from the desert are said to fly the scorpion banner of the same foul god, and the same tokens have been left in the dead hands of the priests of the temples they have sacked. All this evil would seem to have but one root, and that root must be cut out.

'That is why I have called you — in the name of Truth I ask you to seek out and destroy this evil, and let the Giver of Wisdom grant you do so before the stolen document can be used. Whatever its nature, it can mean nothing but ill in the hands of a heretic.'

Nebertehut will offer to equip the party with mounts, supplies, a guide to lead them through the desert and a reasonable amount of standard equipment. The GM should not permit the adventurers to make unreasonable or extortionate demands. Ostensibly, the adventurers are to be doing no more than hunting bandits. The news of the temple murders is to be kept from the general public to avoid causing panic and loss of confidence in the temples.

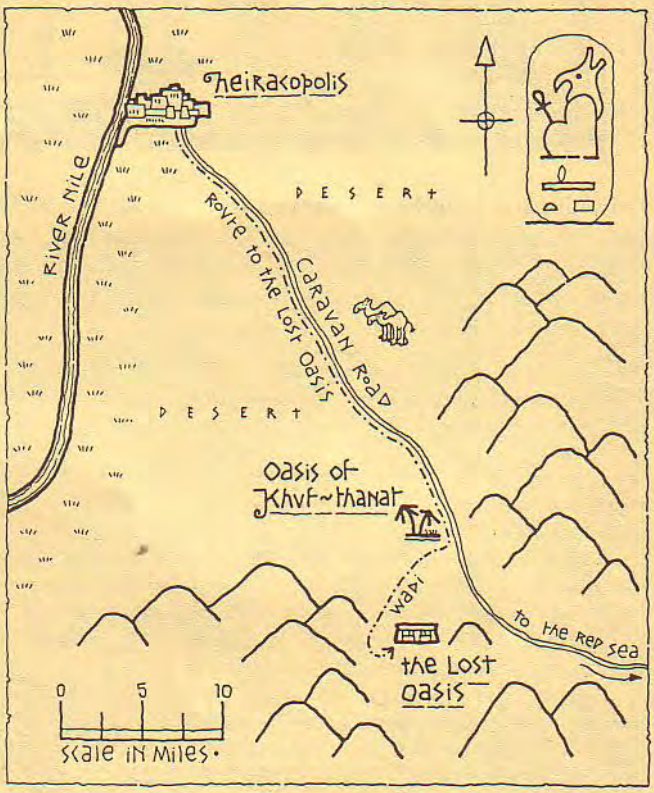
Part 2 — The Trail to Khuf-thanat

Enquiries at the guild-houses or in the marketplace will lead the adventurers to one or more survivors of the bandits' raids. The GM should handle these interviews with care, and remember that if the adventurers are not 'Egyptian' they will be regarded with deep suspicion and probably with a degree of contempt — the Egyptians were a chauvinistic race, and regarded all foreigners as barbarians. In addition to this, there will be a 5% chance that any survivor will be an 'inside man' who is in league with the bandits. Such an individual will deliberately feed the characters misleading information, and may try to send them into a trap or ambush. Every time a reliable survivor is interviewed, the adventurers will gain 1-3 rumours, taken from the list below. (F) indicates that the information is false.

1. The bandits fly a black banner with a golden scorpion.
2. There are about two dozen bandits. They seem to be ordinary desert nomads from their apparel and equipment.
3. The bandit leader is more than ten feet tall and wields a black sword as long as a man (F).
4. They have struck near the oasis of Khuf-thanat more than once, ambushing caravans as they pitched camp for the night.
5. They attacked one caravan at night in the oasis of Khuf-thanat, killing the guards silently so that the rest awoke too late to do anything but run.
6. One of them keeps a pet scorpion in a box, with which he tortures bound prisoners.
7. They have a crystal ball which tells them when a caravan is travelling and what it is carrying (F).
8. When repulsed they retreated south from the oasis along the caravan trail.
9. When repulsed they retreated south-west across the desert.
10. They can call forth scorpions from the empty sand to attack their victims.
11. Their leader's face and hands are never seen. His eyes glow red and his feet end in claws (F).
12. The bandits can appear and disappear at will. The desert hides their approach and swallows their retreat (F).

If the adventurers investigate the area of Khuf-thanat, they will find a wadi (dry water course) about a mile south of the oasis. This runs into a dry river bed followed by the caravan route. If they have taken a guide to lead them to Khuf-thanat, he will notice a few faint tracks leading towards the mountains. If the adventurers do not have a guide or some other character familiar with desert terrain, any character may (*Spot Hidden*) notice the tracks.

Eventually, the GM should allow the party to notice the tracks, or encourage them in some way to follow the wadi. This is only a preliminary to the main adventure for which they must locate the Lost Oasis.



Part 3 — The Lost Oasis

After following the wadi for about 8 miles (half a day's ride in desert conditions), the adventurers will come to the edge of the mountains, where the wadi runs through a narrow gorge into the Lost Oasis.

Area A — The Buildings

These consist of a number of ruined and semi-ruined buildings most of them once the dwellings of the temple priests.

A1 is used by Sethotep's followers, 20 nomads. A combination of the surviving masonry and tent fabric has made most of the building habitable, and one room which is completely intact is used as a strongroom for loot taken in raids — herbs, spices, silks, gold brocade, salt, small items of jewellery, some blank scrolls, perfumed oils in

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Animal Skeletons (mummified crocodiles): Encounter Area G21b.
AC 7; HD ½; hp 2 each; MV 60'; #AT 1 bite; D 1-4; Save NM; Morale 12; AL C; 5xp each.
These skeletons may be turned by a cleric as a though humanoid skeletons. The cleric receives a +1 bonus to the turning dice roll and 1d6+6 individuals will be turned.

Crocodiles: Encounter Area C2.
AC 5; HD 2; hp 13 each; MV 90'; #AT 1 bite; D 1-8; Save F1; AL N; Morale 7; AL N; 35xp each.

Crocodile (Large): Encounter Area C2.
AC 3; HD 6; hp 38; MV 90'; #AT 1 bite; D 2-16; Save F3; AL N; Morale 7; AL N; 275xp.

Ghouls: Encounter Areas H2, H4, H7, H10 and H11.
AC 6; HD 2; hp 9 each; MV 90'; #AT 2 claws/1 bite; D 1-4/1-4/1-6 plus paralysis; Save F2; Morale 9; AL C; immune to sleep and charm spells; 25 each.

Nomads: Encounter Area — 30% chance of being out on a raid, otherwise areas A1-A3.
AC 7; HD 1; hp 4 each; MV 90'; #AT 1 weapon; D 1-6 (short bow), 1-6 (scimitar) or 1-4 (dagger); Save Thief 1; Morale 8; AL C; 10xp each.

Poltergeist: Encounter Area G12.
AC 9; HD ½; 3 hp; MV 60'; #AT 1; D special; Save F2; Morale 12; AL C; 7xp.
The poltergeist is the equivalent of a ghoul when turned by a cleric. It is naturally invisible and may be damaged only by silver or magical weapons. It does not attack in the normal way, but throws nearby objects (as a 5HD monster for hit determination). Any character struck by one of its missiles must save vs. Spells or flee in a random direction for 2-24 melee rounds.

Sandling: Encounter Area G27.
AC 3; HD 4; hp 20; MV 120' in sand, otherwise 60'; #AT 1 pseudopod; D 2-16; Save F4; AL N; 75xp.
The sandling is a shapeless entity of living sand. It is highly aggressive and will attack anything intruding into its territory by lashing out with a coarse, abrasive pseudopod. A large quantity of water (10 gallons or more) will halve its movement rate and the damage caused by its attack. Sandlings are immune to **sleep, charm, hold** and mind influencing spells.

Scorpions: Encounter Area H14.
AC 8; HD 1hp each; MV 40'; #AT 1 sting; D nil plus poison; Save NM; AL N; 6xp each.

Scorpions (large): Encounter Areas H6 and H12.
AC 5; HD 2+2; hp 12 each; MV 90'; #AT 2 claws/1 bite; D 1-4/1-4/1 plus poison; Save F2; AL N; 35xp each.

Sethotep: Encounter Area initially H5.
AC 7; Cleric 8; hp 20; MV 90'; #AT 1; D by weapon; MV 90'; Save C5; Morale 9; AL C; Str 12, Int 13, Wis 17, Dex 10, Con 12, Cha 11; 1200xp.
Spells: **cause light wounds** (x2), **cause fear, hold person** (x3), **continual darkness, curse, animate dead**.
Equipment: leather armour, flail, **dagger +1*, ring of invisibility, ring of animal control** for all scorpions.
* Sethotep, as a cleric of Seth, is allowed to draw blood for sacrificial purposes only, despite the fact that clerics cannot normally carry edged weaponry.

Skeletons: Encounter Areas B2 and B4b.
AC 7; HD 1; hp 3 each; MV 60'; #AT 1; D by weapon; Save F1; Morale 12; AL C; immune to **sleep** and **charm** spells; 10xp each.

Yellow Mold: Encounter Area G6.
AC may always be hit; HD 1; hp 4; MV nil; #AT 1; D Special; Save Special; AL N; 6xp.
Instead of inflicting normal damage, this yellow mold will release a cloud of spores in a 10 foot diameter sphere if it is disturbed. Any creature caught in the cloud of spores must save vs Poison or die unless they receive a cure disease within 36 hours.

Zombies: Encounter Areas F, G10, G15, G28, H5 and H10.
AC 8; HD 2; MV 90'; hp 10 each; #AT 1 claw (or by weapon); D 1-8; Save F1; Morale 12; AL C; immune to **sleep, charm** spells; 20xp each.

stoppered jars, glassware, three camel and two horse saddles etc, some 20 camel loads in all, worth 1150gp (B/A) or 3800sp (DQ). This room is guarded by two men at all times unless the whole group is on a raid.

A2 is used as a makeshift corral. At present there are 18 camels penned in here — in due course they will be sold.

A3 has been converted into a stables for the nomads' horses (31 in total). They are housed in stalls crudely built of rubble within the building.

Area B — Main Entrance and the Pylons

The main entrance of the temple enclosure is flanked by a pair of 75-foot-high stone pylons. Carved on the face of each is a huge relief of Seth and Sobek rampaging through the armies of Lower Egypt.

B1. Empty Room: This chamber shows signs of recent clearance. It was once a guard room.

B2. Staircase: This leads to the roof of the pylon. Stationed on the roof are **two skeletons**, each equipped with a short bow and a quiver of twenty arrows. There is also a large gong, which one of the skeletons will sound if intruders are sighted.

B3. Minor Shrine: At the western end of this chamber stands a 12-foot-high basalt statue of Sobek. The rest of the room is taken up by bronze cages — cells where victims were held before being sacrificed to the sacred crocodiles in the pool at C2. If the statue is investigated closely (*Spot Hidden*), a spyhole will be found in its chest, allowing this room to be watched from B4a.

B4. Staircase and Spyhole: The passage at B4a leads inside the statue of Sobek in B3. That room may be watched through a spyhole at eye height, and by shouting in this chamber the statue can be made to 'speak' in a muffled, booming voice. The passage at B4b leads to the roof of the western pylon, where another **two skeletons** are stationed, again armed with short bows.

Area C — Main Spring and Crocodile Pool

C1. The Spring: The main spring of the oasis issues from the rock face into a carved stone trough measuring 20 feet by 10 feet. It is from this trough that the water supply of the whole temple is drawn. The water is pure and drinkable, but a little cloudy. An overflow channel set into the floor feeds the crocodile pool (C2).

C2. Crocodile Pool: Set around with a stone wall 4 feet high, this sunken pool is used by the sacred crocodiles of Sobek. An island has been constructed in the middle of the pool, where the crocodiles bask and on which stands a small shrine to Sobek. If the adventurers look carefully they will see the unfinished remains of the crocodiles' last meal floating in the pool — human remains as befits sacred crocodiles. In the reeds and the water are **four crocodiles** 10-15 feet long, and on the island basks a monstrous specimen, a **large crocodile** 25 feet from nose to tail.

The crocodiles are used to seeing humans moving about on the other side of the wall, but will regard anyone entering the pool area as a meal. They will prevent any character from entering the small shrine (C3) on the island.

C3. Small Shrine: This is miniature copy a small temple to Sobek, with a carved and collonaded facade. The floor of the shrine is littered with dried reeds and sand. A clutch of eleven crocodile eggs is partially buried in one corner. In the centre of the shrine, also partially covered, is a wooden trapdoor into the secret passage from the antechamber of Sobek's tomb (G21b).

Area D — Private Shrines

The walls of these rooms have crumbled in places, although the wall marking out the temple enclosure shows signs of recent repair. Once private shrines owned by some of the richer patrons of the temple, each of these rooms contains a small altar and a stone idol of either Seth or Sobek.

Area E — Side Entrance

A little less grand than the main entrance to the temple enclosure, this was the entrance used by the priests in their everyday business. A corroded bronze gate hangs on one hinge across the inner gateway, its bottom edge lost in an accumulation of sand and debris.

Area F — The Quarry

On the south-eastern side of the temple enclosure, a number of figures are working to extract rock from the steep valley side. As the adventurers approach they will see the figures are actually **11 zombies**, tirelessly carving out material for the repair of the temple. Their orders are merely to quarry rock and they will ignore any intruders unless attacked. They are victims of the raids, and many have crudely stitched wounds in their chests.

Area G — The Temple

G1. Facade: The temple is fronted by six 40 foot-high pillars, linked by a wall 20 feet high. The two entrance pillars are carved to resemble reeds, while others are desert palms — symbolising the position of the oasis surrounded by the desert. This pattern is repeated in the pillars of the Hypostyle halls. The scene carved on the wall shows a King of Upper Egypt, priests and acolytes, making offerings to Seth and Sobek.

G2. Outer Hypostyle Hall: The pillars in this immense chamber are identical to those of the facade. The roof is missing in places, allowing daylight to filter in from above, but the rubble from the collapses has been cleared away. The inner walls carvings show the King directing the building of the Temple while Seth and Sobek watch with approval.

G3. Inner Hypostyle Hall: The roof of this chamber is 25 feet high, and like the outer hypostyle, it is missing in places. The rubble has been cleared away. The walls show scenes of the Temple dedication — offerings being made to Seth, Sobek and other gods, including Seth's 72 conspirators in the murder of Osiris.

G4. Laboratory: This chamber's roof is intact, and light enters through an opening high in the outside wall. Two iron torch-holders set either side of the doorway provided further illumination. Once a small laboratory for the manufacture of incense and similar substances used in the temple, the room has not been cleared of debris, among which are several whole and broken mortars and a small bronze scale pan. A stone bench runs down each long wall, and the end wall is taken up by a large, stained stone trough. The outlet funnel is just above floor level, but the wooden bung which would once have sealed it is missing.

Beneath the workbench are several large jars of aromatic powders used in the manufacture of incense. Most are now stale and worthless, but 1-3 jars are still sealed, and their contents may have some commercial value (B/A: 1-3gp; DQ: 1-10sp). Behind the jars is a tripod incense burner of much-tarnished silver (B/A: 15gp; DQ: 50sp).

The walls are carved with reliefs of the King grinding a number of substances in a large mortar, mixing powders and precious oils, and finally offering incense and perfumes to Seth and Sobek.

G5. Desert Chapel: This room, like G4, is lit by a high window. A small altar stands in the middle of the room with a statue of Seth behind it. He is depicted, holding a date-laden palm branch, as the Lord of the Desert. The wall carvings show the King hunting in the desert, and offering desert riches — water, dates, cooked joints of camel and wild ass, etc — to Seth.

G6. Offering Room: A low altar, bearing a few old and withered offerings, stands in front of a statue of Seth, shown holding a loaf of bread and a joint of meat. A patch of **yellow mold** has grown over the offerings. The carvings in this room show worshippers offering agricultural produce to Seth, who rewards them by ensuring the continuation of the water supply to their farmsteads on the desert fringes.

G7. Offering Room: The doors to this room stand open, and behind an altar stands an idol of Seth, depicted with both hands full of gems. The adventurers may (*Spot Hidden*) notice a small lapis lazuli pendant in the form of a crocodile (B/A: 20gp; DQ: 65sp) on the floor by the altar. The wall carvings show Kings and Princes offering caskets of jewels, precious oils, rich silks and other valuable objects to Seth.

G8. Room of Libations: This room does not have an altar, but the idol of Seth holds a shallow dish in its outstretched hand to receive liquid offerings.

On the floor are two small pitchers made of faience, a bright blue semi-precious glass-paste material. Each pitcher is worth 10gp (B/A) or 30sp (DQ), and one still contains a small amount of water consecrated to Seth for the purpose of libations (B/A: **unholy water**, sufficient for 5 vials; DQ: the water is sufficent for 5 vials. Each vial will have the effect of a grenado on entities which are harmed by magical or consecrated objects. However the water has been consecrated according to the rites of an evil cult, and this may modify its effects on certain entities).

The wall carvings show offerings of wine, precious oils and perfumes being poured into similar dishes and being offered up before Seth.

G9. Silver Room: The room door has been forced open, and lies just inside the room. The wall carvings in the chamber show gold and silver coins being taken into Seth's temples on long caravans. A statue of Seth sits against the back wall, with an abacus in one hand and a roll of papyrus in the other. The huge piles of gold and silver have, however, long since gone.

G10. Altar Hall: In the centre of this chamber stands the high altar to Seth and Sobek, carved from a single block of black basalt, and inscribed with prayers of dedication and praise.

At each corner of the high altar stands a mummified figure holding a flail, and as any intruders enter the hall, two will move to attack. Despite appearances, these are **four zombies** — dead priests whom Sethotep has re-animated to serve the temple once more. Their main purpose is to discourage inquisitive nomads from exploring in Sethotep's absence. If the first pair meet determined resistance the second pair will make their way to G24 and thence via the secret passage to the tomb to raise the alarm.

The altar is caked with dried blood, but the presence of three hearts on it testifies to more recent use.

The doorway into G14 is flanked by 12-foot-high basalt statues, one of Seth and the other of Sobek. Each holds a Pharaoh's symbolic flail in one hand and an ankh (a looped cross symbolising Life) in the other. The wall carvings show rites in honour of Seth and Sobek, including the sacrifice of bound captives.

G11. Passage: This narrow side chamber opens onto a sloping passage leading to room G21b. It is choked with rubble from a roof collapse at the point marked on the map, and will require at least 30 minutes work by four people to clear sufficient rubble to squeeze through.

G12. Preparation Chamber: A bronze bowl, mounted on a thin-legged tripod that is green with age, stands in the main part of this room. The far end of the chamber is caged off by equally corroded bronze bars. Inside the cage is a human skeleton, the decayed mortal remains of a forgotten prisoner. The anguished soul of this poor unfortunate now haunts the chamber as a **poltergeist**, and will harass any intruders by throwing any loose object — even its own bones as a last resort. It is completely bound to the place of its death and cannot pursue intruders who leave the chamber.

If the bowl is closely inspected, it will be found to have an inlay of silver, amber and lapis lazuli (B/A: 25gp; DQ: 50sp). Lying on the floor amongst the dust and debris are a bronze holy water sprinkler and a small copper incense burner.

The reliefs on the walls of this chamber show terrified captives being bound and ritually prepared for sacrifice. Clearly, this was the room's function.

G13. Sacred Pool: Two flights of steps lead down to a platform above the sacred pool, which is fed from below by a secondary spring of the oasis. In the centre of the pool is a plinth bearing a basalt statue of Sobek and the three walls facing the platform are decorated with carvings of reeds and other aquatic plants.

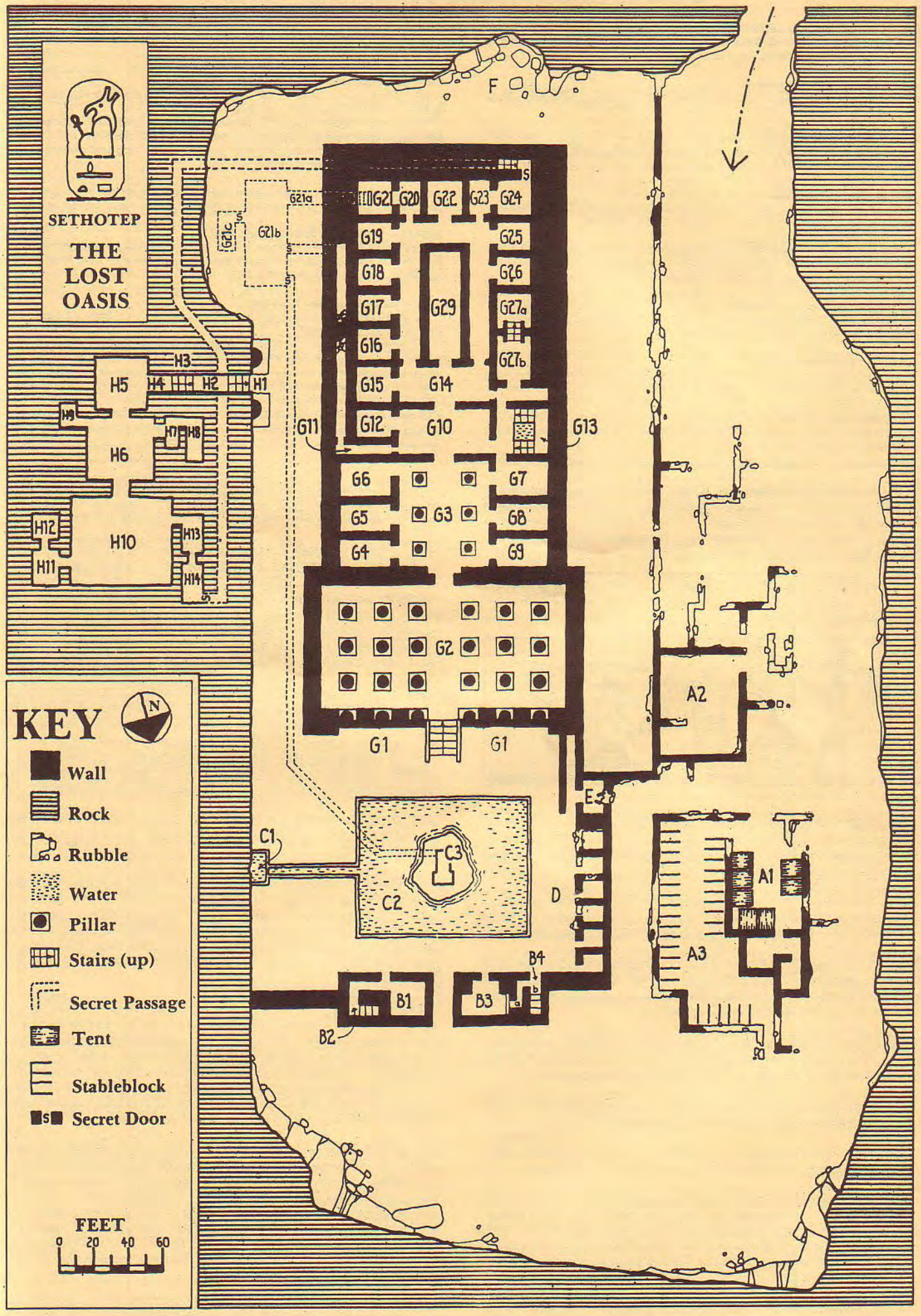
G14. Vestibule: The ceiling of this room has fallen down in places, and the all rubble has not been cleared away. The walls are carved with scenes of the worship of Seth and Sobek, and carved figures of each in low relief flank the doorway into G28.

G15. Storeroom: The door of this room has been forced open, and hangs on one twisted hinge. A mummified figure — a **zombie** — is occupied in gathering fragments of cloth that are strewn across the floor and replacing them in the various chests and coffers in the room. It will ignore intruders unless attacked.

Four chests have not been opened and these still contain two fine robes and one jewelled leopard skin (B/A: 45gp; DQ: 150sp) among the other rotted and useless fragments. Thorough robbers should be able to extract gold and silver thread worth 30gp (B/A) or 100sp (DQ) from the other robes.

The room was a kind of vestry for the priests of the temple, and the chests contained ceremonial robes and banners — one of which is now the nomad's scorpion banner — although most are damaged or badly preserved.

G16. Chapel of the Dispossessed: This chilly room is dedicated to Seth as the patron and protector of the usurped or dispossessed. A tall statue of Seth stands behind an altar, holding the Crown of Upper Egypt in one hand, and with the other hand outstretched in a gesture of warding. On the altar are two slightly damp hearts. The carvings on the four walls tell the story of Seth's rule of Upper Egypt, how the region prospered during this time, and how his throne was usurped by Osiris — depicted as an envious brother who became a bloodthirsty tyrant — and include hymns and prayers for protection against tyranny and the envy of others.


SETHOTEP
THE LOST OASIS
KEY
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Wall
Rock
Rubble
Water
Pillar
Stairs (up)
Secret Passage
Tent
Stableblock
Secret Door
FEET
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G8
G4
G9
G2
G1
G1
H3
H5
H4
H2
H1
H9
H7
H8
H6
H12
H10
H13
H11
H14
A2
E
C1
C3
C2
D
A1
A3
B4
B1
B3
B2

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Game

Animal Skeletons (mummified crocodiles): Encounter Area G21b.
AC 8; MV 6"; HD 1-1; hp 2 each; #AT 1; D 1-4; SD immune to sleep, charm, hold and cold-based attacks; 12xp each; AL N; S M; MM2.

Crocodiles: Encounter Area C2.
AC 5; MV 6"//12"; HD 3; hp 13 each; #AT 2; D 2-8/1-12; 112xp each; AL N; S L; MM.

Crocodile (Large): Encounter Area C2.
AC 4; MV 6"//12"; HD 7; hp 38; #AT 2; D 3-18/2-20; xp 704; AL N; S L; MM - giant crocodile.

Ghouls: Encounter Areas H2, H4, H7, H10 and H11.
AC 6; MV 9"; HD 2; hp 8 each; #AT 3; D 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA Paralyzation; SD immune to sleep and charm; 81xp each; AL CE; S M; MM.

Nomads: Encounter Area: 30% chance out on a raid; otherwise areas A1-A3.
AC 8; MV 12"; HD 1-6 hp; hp 4 each; #AT 1; D 1-6 (short bow), 1-8 (scimitar) or 1-4 (dagger); 11xp each; AL LE(N); S M; MM - dervishes, nomads.

Poltergeist: Encounter Area G12.
AC 10; MV 6"; HD ½; hp 2; #AT nil; D nil; SA Fear; SD Invisibility, silver or magical weapons to hit; xp 36; AL LE; S M; FF.

Sandling: Encounter Area G27.
AC 3; MV 12" (6"); HD 4; hp 20; #AT 1; D 2-16; SD immune to mind influencing spells, vulnerable to water; xp 165; AL N; S L; MM2.

Scorpions: Encounter Area H14.
AC 9; MV 3"; HD 1hp; hp 1 each; #AT 1; D nil; SA Poison; 31xp each; AL N; S S (2 inches long); New monster.

Scorpions (Large): Encounter Areas H6 and H12.
AC 5; MV 9"; HD 2+2; hp 13 each; #AT 3; D 1-3/1-3/1; SA Poison sting; 129xp each; AL N; S S; MM2.

Sethotep: Encounter Area initially H5.
AC 7; MV 9"; Cleric 5; hp 28; #AT 1; D by weapon; SA Spells; S 12, I 13, W 17, D 10, C 12, Ch 11; xp 583; AL LE; S M.
Spells: **cause light wounds** (x2), **detect magic** (x2), **sanctuary, hold person** (x3), **speak with animals** (x2), **animate dead, continual darkness.**
Equipment: Studded leather armour, flail, dagger +1*, **ring of invisibility, ring of animal control** for all scorpions.

* Sethotep, as a cleric of Seth, is allowed to draw blood for sacrificial purposes only, despite the fact that clerics cannot normally carry edged weaponry.

Skeletons: Encounter Areas B2 and B4b.
AC 7; MV 12"; HD 1; 5 hp each; #AT 1; D 1-6; SD immune to **sleep, charm, hold** and cold-based attacks, edged weapons do half damage; 19xp each; AL N; S M; MM.

Yellow Mold: Encounter Area G6.
AC 9; MV 0"; HD n/a; hp n/a; #AT nil; D nil; SA spores; SD Only affected by fire; xp nil; AL N; S S; MM.
This particular yellow mold is too small to have an effective enzyme attack, but if it is disturbed it will release a cloud of spores in a 10 foot diameter sphere. Any creature caught in the cloud of spores must save vs Poison or die unless they receive a **cure disease** within 36 hours.

Zombies: Encounter Areas: F, G10, G15, G28, H5 and H10.
AC 8; MV 6"; HD 2; hp 9 each; #AT 1; D 1-8; SD immune to sleep, charm, hold and cold-based attacks; 38xp each; AL N; S M; MM.

G17. Chapel of the Stratagems: In this chamber Seth is venerated as the patron of conspirators and those who plan vengeance. The statue of Seth holds a model of the casket in which Osiris was trapped, finely crafted of silver inlaid with garnet and lapis lazuli (B/A: 250gp; DQ: 830sp). It is magically protected against theft:

B: Any character attempting to steal the model must save vs Spells or suffer the effects of a **blight** (the reverse of the second level cleric spell **bless**) for 6 turns.

A: A **glyph of warding** has been placed on the casket, invoking the first level cleric spell **curse** (the reverse of **bless**) on any character removing it from the statue's hand, unless a saving throw vs Spells is made.

DQ: A Ward (cast at Rank 6) has been placed on the casket, which will cause any character removing it from the statue's hand to suffer the effects of the **Evil Eye Spell** (S-9 of the College of Black Magics).

The wall carvings show Seth and his 72 conspirators in the murder of Osiris — represented as a brilliant and stylish revenge — along with prayers to Seth as the divine inspiration of ruses and stratagems and the hope of those with insurmountable problems.

G18. Chapel of Refuge from Sorcery: This chapel is dedicated to Seth as the protector of those assailed by magic. The statue of Seth is shown making a protective gesture to warn off hostile magic:

B: Magic from any source will not function within the chapel and monsters of an enchanted nature cannot enter.

A: The entire chapel is covered by a permanent **anti-magic shell**, which is treated as though cast by an 18th level magic user.

DQ: The chapel has been completely insulated from mana. No spell or invested magical item will function inside the room, and no creature of a magical nature will be able to enter. At the GM's discretion the general counterspell of the College of Ensorcelments and Enchantments, cast at Rank 7 or higher, may negate this effect, although the chance of success is reduced by 40%.

The wall carvings tell the story (from Seth's viewpoint) of how, after he had regained his throne, he was thwarted by Isis — depicted as a witch of demonic aspect, performing horrifying acts of necromancy in order to raise a zombie-like Osiris — and hymns and prayers for protection against foul sorcery are carved into the wall behind the statue.

G19. Chapel of Refuge from Violence: The statue of Seth is armoured in scale mail but unarmed and making a placatory gesture. It stands behind an altar which bears the remains of a falcon, sacrificed to symbolise Seth's revenge over Horus. The carvings in this chapel tell of Horus, depicted as an evil ogre-like figure, his rebellion against Seth and of Seth's expulsion from the throne for a second time. Prayers for protection against barbaric aggressors are inscribed behind the statue. The Chapel contains nothing else of interest or value.

G20. Antechamber to the Chapel of Sobek: The antechamber is empty except for a small altar, bearing dedicatory inscriptions to Sobek and caked with dried blood. A figure of Sobek is carved into the back wall of the antechamber, his arms outstretched in a protective gesture. The other walls bear scenes of Seth's flight to the swamp, Sobek rising to receive him, the two gods killing falcons with their arrows and rampaging victoriously through the armies of the Lower Kingdom.

G21. Chapel of Sobek: A 15-foot-high basalt statue of Sobek stands behind a bloodstained altar, flanked by a pair of old and rusted iron braziers.

The adventurers may (*Spot Hidden*) notice that a series of shallow channels on top of the altar run into a concealed cavity in the altar itself. When a certain quantity of blood (B/A: 1hp; DQ: 1DP) or an equivalent amount of some other liquid has been poured into this cavity, a delicate counterweight mechanism will be activated. One face of the altar will slide down into the floor revealing a flight of steps down to the crypt (rooms G21a-c).

G21a. Hallway: This passage, decorated with funeral scenes, symbolises the transition from this world to the next as viewed by the cult of Sobek. Souls are shown in various stages of judgement — those found wanting are fed to a hideous crocodile-headed demon with the forequarters and mane of a lion and the hindquarters of a hippopotamus, while those judged favourably are shown crouching in adoration before a huge figure of Sobek, then transformed into crocodile-headed beings like Sobek before entering a fertile marshy paradise.

G21b. Antechamber: The two long walls of this chamber are lined with richly decorated mummy cases and shelves, upon which rest the mummified remains of a number of crocodiles. If anyone enters the chamber without first uttering a short prayer to Sobek, 1-4 of these **animal skeleton** crocodiles will burst free of their wrappings and slither to the attack. A further 1-4 animal skeletons will animate each round during which there are intruders in the chamber, until twenty are active. They will pursue intruders to the foot of the stairs, but will not attempt to leave the crypt.

A small altar to Sobek stands in the centre of the chamber and a concealed catch in the altar (*Spot Hidden*) will cause a section of the

shelving to swing back, revealing the end of the sloping passage at G11.

The mummy cases will yield 50-200gp (B/A)/160-660sp (DQ) in jewellery and small gems. Two have concealed catches (*Spot Hidden*) allowing them to swing open, revealing the main burial chamber and a passage leading to the shrine in the Crocodile Pool (C3).

G21c. Main Burial Chamber: At the centre of the chamber stands a massive black basalt sarcophagus. The walls are painted with temple and funereal scenes, similar to those on the walls of the Hallway (G21a).

The lid of the sarcophagus is connected to a trap mechanism (DQ: Rank 5), and unless the trap is successfully removed, raising the lid will cause the shaded area of the floor to fall away. Any characters standing on this area will drop down a shaft into a sinkhole, fed by the waters of the oasis (treat as quicksand). Inside the sarcophagus is a wooden mummy case, inlaid with rich woods and small stones (B/A: 30gp; DQ: 100sp). The mummy case is not trapped, and the mummy is wearing a pair of gold bracelets, a jade crocodile amulet, and a heavy gold ring (B/A: 50gp each, 25gp, 40gp; DQ: 160sp each, 80sp, 130sp).

G22. Chapel of the Justice of Seth: This chapel is dedicated to Seth as the giver of justice and restitution. A statue of Seth holds the Crown of Upper Egypt in one hand and brandishes a war flail in the other.

A small vial of clear viscous liquid stands on the altar, which is inscribed with prayers to Seth the Avenger. The liquid is scorpion venom, which is highly poisonous if drunk (B/A: save vs Poison or die instantly; DQ: nerve agent — see 50.8 Alchemist skill — which causes 4DP/Pulse for d5 pulses or until an antidote is given).

Wall carvings show the body of Osiris being burnt, Isis being drowned for witchcraft, Horus bound, tortured and finally beheaded, and the temples of all three being destroyed and the sites ritually cleansed.

G23. Antechamber to the Chapel of the Allies: The antechamber is empty. The walls are carved with figures of the 72 minor deities and others who assisted in the murder of Osiris. Each is named and praised as a friend of justice and an ally beloved of Seth.

G24. The Chapel of the Allies: In the centre of the room stands a small altar and a bronze tripod holding a libation dish. The walls of this chamber are lined with niches, each containing a stone statuette of one of the conspirators. Close investigation will reveal (*Spot Hidden*) that twisting the hand of one of the statuettes causes the marked section of the wall to swing outwards, giving access to the steps and a secret passage linking the Chapel with H14 in the Tombs.

G25. Chapel of the Scorpion: Seth is venerated here as the lord of desert creatures, and a statue of him holds a jewelled silver scorpion (B/A: 350gp; DQ: 1170sp). Any attempt to remove the scorpion from the statue's hand will activate a poison needle trap (DQ: Rank 7) loaded with an identical poison to that in G22.

G26. Treasury: The walls are lined with coffers which have been forced open. All that remains is one gold ring set with a garnet (B/A: 120gp; DQ 400sp), which is half hidden in the dust. The wall carvings show offerings of gold, silver and gems being made to Seth.

G27. Chapel of Dedication: In the upper part of the chamber (G27a) stands a statue of Seth dressed as a priest. In front of this is a tank full of fine desert sand (once used as part of a dedication ritual) set into the floor of the chapel. This is covered in a layer of dust and there is a chance that the tank may not be noticed (*Spot Hidden*) until an adventurer stumbles into it. Since the desertion of the temple, it has become the home of a rare mineral entity (B/A: **sandling**; DQ: **sand golem**)

In the sand of the tank are a jewelled golden armlet and a faience amulet in the form of a scorpion (B/A: 130gp, 10gp; DQ: 430sp, 30sp).

The walls of this chapel show scenes of the training and consecration of priests of Seth, and the walls of G27b are inscribed with prayers to Seth.

G28. Inner Sanctuary: This great chamber is dominated by a huge seated statue of Seth. It wears the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt, and sits on the Throne of the Gods. The statue is dressed in rich robes and adorned with jewellery — it wears a pair of golden armlets and a collar of gold worked in lapis lazuli and emerald (B/A: 300gp each, 1200gp; DQ 1000sp each, 4000sp). The jewellery has obviously been made specifically for the statue, as it is too big to be worn by any humanoid smaller than a storm giant.

Carvings on the walls tell the same story of Seth as in G16-22. In front of the statue is an altar, upon which are signs of a recent sacrifice. Before the altar stand **two zombies** with crudely stitched chest wounds.

Area H — The Tombs

Between two colossal seated statues of Seth is the entrance to the tombs hewn out of the valley side for the temple priests. Sethotep now uses this underground construction for his arcane activities.

H1. Staircase: The staircase has broad, shallow steps and an iron handrail to either side.

H2. Hall: This hall is guarded by **two ghouls**, placed here to scare away any of inquisitive nomads. They will advance, in a threatening fashion, as soon as any intruders reach the bottom of the stairs, but as soon as the first blow is struck they will try to disengage and flee to H5.

H3. Staircase: This flight of stairs is similar to those at H1.

H4. Hall: The entrance to antechamber (H5) is guarded by **two ghouls**, with the same purpose and behaviour as those in the other hall (H2).

H5. Antechamber: **Sethotep** will be in here, animating the occupant of a mummy case which lies on the floor amidst empty mummy cases and other debris, which the ghouls from H2 and H4 will use to construct a barricade if given sufficient time. Sethotep will order the undead to fight and he will then withdraw into H6 to ready his large scorpions.

Propped against the back wall are four closed mummy cases. Four freshly animated **zombies** will burst from the cases and attack any intruders once Sethotep has left the chamber or before, if he manages to order them to do so.

H6. Main Chamber: The only occupants of this painted burial chamber are **two large scorpions** — almost 4 feet in length. They are held in separate pens built of mummy cases and other tomb fittings. It is these that Sethotep will use against the party if given the chance.

H7. Guardroom: This tomb antechamber is occupied by **four ghouls**, who will be gazing at the merchants in H8 through a barricade of mummy cases and other debris unless the alarm has been raised. If the alarm has been raised they will be waiting to attack any intruders.

H8. Tomb: Huddled around the empty stone sarcophagus in the centre of the chamber are three extremely frightened merchants, the survivors of the last caravan to be attacked by the nomads. Watching their fellow merchants being fed to crocodiles, ghouls and scorpions, sacrificed on the altars of Seth and re-animated as zombies has left them somewhat apprehensive about the future.

H9. Storeroom: This tomb is used to store items for refitting the temple and seven bodies Sethotep was unable to re-animate as zombies — now to be used to feed the ghouls and other monsters. The items are: a portable shrine of lacquered wood containing a jade statuette of Seth (B/A: 150gp; DQ 500sp), a small altar of wood and ivory representing the chest in which Osiris was confined (B/A: 50gp; DQ: 160sp), a small casket containing a pair of silver armlets in the form of a coiled cobra (B/A: 50gp each; DQ: 166sp each), a small chest containing three leopardskin stoles and two robes in good condition, two stoppered earthernware jars of powdered incense, two large iron braziers, a pair of bronze tripod incense burners and a bronze sprinkler for holy water.

H10. Burial Chamber: This is the main chamber for the former priests, whom Sethotep is now using to reconstruct the temple. The walls are lined with mummy cases, all open and mostly empty. **Three zombies** will be in here moving the mummy cases which are still occupied into H6 so that Sethotep can re-animate the bodies. **Two ghouls** are posted at all times outside the doorway to H13.

H11. Antechamber: **Two ghouls** occupy this room, along with an empty stone sarcophagus lying against one wall. The doorway to H12 is blocked by its stone lid, which has been reinforced by magical means (B: equivalent of a **cause light wounds** spell; A: a **glyph of warding** causing 10 points of fire damage; DQ: Ward of the **Fire and Brimstone Spell**, invested by Sethotep at rank 4), which will be triggered by any creature crossing the threshold or touching the slab without first uttering a short prayer to Seth.

H12. Hatchery: This tomb has been cleared and is occupied by a **large scorpion**, which has just given birth to a brood of twelve young. The young scorpions are clinging to their mother's back, giving her some additional protection (B/A: AC improved by one; DQ: absorbs an extra 2DP — they will be scattered by the first blow, negating this bonus). The young cannot attack, and each can be killed with one blow.

H13. Sethotep's Quarters: This antechamber has been taken over by Sethotep. A pile of rich fabrics and silk cushions, looted from various caravans, lies in one corner and serves as a bed.

DRAGONQUEST® Game

Animal Skeletons (mummified crocodiles): Encounter Area G21b.
Average statistics:

PS 9	MD 6	AG 8	MA none
EN 8	FT 8	WP 23	PC 16
PB 1	TMR 3	NA None	

The skeletal crocodiles can attack only in close combat, with bite only (Base chance of 10%, +1 damage no Rank). They are invulnerable to weapons that inflict A type damage.

Crocodiles: Encounter Area C2.

PS 17	MD 5	AG 7	MA none
EN 7	FT 15	WP 7	PC 8
PB 7	TMR 1/3	NA Scales absorb 6DP	

Crocodile (Large): Encounter Area C2.

PS 30	MD 5	AG 7	MA none
EN 15	FT 30	WP 7	PC 8
PB 5	TMR 1	NA Scales absorb 6DP	

This gigantic individual attacks as a normal crocodile except that its bite causes +3 damage.

Ghouls: Encounter Areas H2, H4, H7, H10 and H11.

PS 14	MD 8	AG 6	MA none
EN 18	FT 25	WP 18	PC 10
PB 1	TMR 3	NA None	

The ghouls fight unarmed.

Nomads: Encounter Area: 30% chance of being out on a raid, otherwise areas A1-A3.
Average statistics:

PS 17	MD 17	AG 18	MA 5
EN 17	FT 23	WP 15	PC 10
PB 10	TMR 6	NA None	

They are armed with scimitars (Rank 1-2), daggers (Rank 0-3) and short bows (Rank 0-2). They have the following skills: Ranger Rank 2-5, Unarmed Combat Rank 0-1, Horsemanship Rank 2-5.

Poltergeist: Encounter Area G12.
Treat the poltergeist as a ghost which cannot become visible, but can throw small objects (small enough to be thrown by a normal human) as if with an MD of 25. Any character struck by one of these missiles must make a will power roll (with a difficulty factor of 3) to avoid panicking as though meeting a normal ghost.

Sand Golem: Encounter Area G27.

PS 23	MD none	AG 10	MA none
EN 13	FT 21	WP 10	PC 6
PB 6	TMR 6/4	NA 4DP due to composition	

This monster is from the introductory module 'The Camp of Alla-Akabar', which is included in the 2nd edition rulebook.

Scorpions: Encounter Area H14.

PS 1	MD none	AG 18	MA none
EN 1	FT 1	WP 8	PC 11
PB 4	TMR 3	NA none	

Scorpions (Large): Encounter Areas H6 and H12.

PS 15	MD 19	AG 18	MA none
EN 10	FT 18	WP 8	PC 11
PB 3	TMR 5	NA chitin absorbs 3DP	

Weapons: Large scorpions attack in melee and close combat with two claws (Base chance of 45%, -1 damage, no Rank) and its tail sting (Base chance of 30%, nerve poison 3DP/Pulse until an antidote is applied).

Sethotep Encounter Area: initially H5.

PS 16	MD 13	AG 11	MA 20
EN 15	FT 20	WP 18	PC 11
PB 15	TMR none	NA none	

He wears leather armour and is armed with a flail (Rank 3) and a dagger (Rank 5) which is enchanted to give its user one additional rank when fighting with it.

He is an Adept of the College of Necromantic Conjurations, with the following spells (spell code/rank achieved): T-1/5, G-1/5, G-2/4, Q-1/3, Q-2/2, S-1/4, S-3/2, S-7/2. The GM may add to this list if desired, but these are the bare minimum to make the scenario work. He is a Rank 1 Astrologer, Rank 2 Healer and a Rank 3 Ranger (specialising in deserts).

He wears a ring which has been invested with the Spell of Invisibility (G-8 of the College of Celestial Magics), at Rank 7 with a 96% chance of success (four charges remain), and a ring which has been invested with the Spell of Controlling Animals (G-6 of the College of Sorceries of the Mind). This enchantment is such that it may only be used to control scorpions — up to 20 normal scorpions and two of the larger variety.

Skeletons: Encounter Areas B2 and B4b.

PS 10	MD 14	AG 12	MA none
EN 8	FT 10	WP 20	PC 14
PB 1	TMR 3	NA none	

Skeletons are immune to damage from weapons rated as inflicting A type damage.

Yellow Mold: Encounter Area G6.
None of the attributes usually used to describe monsters are applicable here. The mold exists on organic matter in dark, fairly cool places, and if disturbed will release a choking cloud of spores in a 10-foot diameter sphere. Any creature caught in the cloud must make a successful endurance roll (difficulty factor of 3) or become infested with mold, dying within 36 hours unless a Healer can Cure Infection and Repair Tissues and Organs within that time. The mold may be destroyed by normal or magical fire, but is impervious to any other form of attack.

Zombies: Encounter Areas F, G10, G15, G28, H5 and H10.

PS 10	MD 6	AG 4	MA none
EN 16	FT 20	WP 18	PC 8
PB 1	TMR 3	NA none	

The zombies in G10 use their flails at Rank 1. The rest fight unarmed.

Against one wall is an apparently undisturbed sarcophagus. It actually contains a large quantity of mixed coins, small gems and pieces of jewellery, worth in total 3500gp (B/A) or 11,000sp (DQ) — the former temple treasury with which Sethotep hopes to repair the sanctuary.

H14. Scorpion Nursery: This chamber is empty save for two upturned mummy cases used as workbenches. The cases are covered in an assortment of glass bottles and jars and on one is a small stack of papyri and other writing materials. This is where Sethotep breeds the scorpions used to murder the priests of other religions. The bottles and jars contain a total of **28 normal scorpions**, some with young.

The scroll from the temple of Thoth is with the others in the stack. The rest are notes Sethotep has made while trying to decipher it. The archaic language, complex allegories and priestly content of the document, as well as its great age, mean that while the adventurers will recognise this as the object of their quest, it is impossible for them to decipher its true meaning. A **comprehend languages** spell will not decipher the scroll.

The concealed door leads to the passage to the Chapel of the Allies (G24).

Ending the Adventure

The defeat of the bandits will earn the adventurers the goodwill of the priests and people of Heiracopolis. The merchant class, while grateful, will demand the return of their merchandise, a sum several times greater than the treasure from the bandits' lair. It should be possible to reach a compromise if Nebertehut is asked to exert his influence on the party's behalf. If Sethotep is killed or captured, the party will be given a reward (B/A: 2000gp; DQ: 7000sp) by the priesthood, and allowed to keep any equipment given to them at the start of the adventure.

In addition:

B/A: Any cleric or magic user of good alignment will be given a scroll of 1-4 spells of 4th level or below, manufactured to order by the priests.

DQ: Any member of the party with sufficient experience points will be given free training — Rank 1 in up to four spells or rituals of the Colleges of Ensorcelments and Enchantments, Naming Incantations or Celestial Magics or an advance of one Rank in either Alchmeist, Astrologer or Healer skill. All living expenses will be paid during the period of tuition. Experience points should be awarded for this mini-module as if for a five-hour game session. The GM may consider a bonus for killing or capturing Sethotep appropriate.

Part 4 - Monsters and NPCs

Boxed sections on pages 27 (B), 30 (A) and 32 (DQ) give all the details of monsters and NPCs for the entire adventure, in alphabetical order. The camels (A2), horses (A3), and merchants (H8) are all average for their types, so no statistics have been provided for them.

Sethotep, regardless of the game system used, wears a pendant of finely-worked gold in the shape of a cartouche bearing the name of Seth and his title as the Lord of the South (B/A: 75gp; DQ: 250sp). Each nomad has a personal treasure of 3-30gp (B/A) or 10-100sp (DQ), and has a 5% chance of possessing one or two low value gems.

Credits

Design: Graeme Davis
Development: Mike Brunton
Art: Brian Williams
Cartography: Paul Ruiz

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THE AUTHORS
To regular readers of White Dwarf, the author/illustrator team of Joe Dever and Gary Chalk needs little introduction. Both are contributing editors to the magazine with their popular 'Tabletop Heroes' miniatures review feature. In 1982, Joe Dever won the Advanced Dungeons and Dragons ® Championships in Baltimore, USA, and he has appeared on TV, radio and in the national press in connection with fantasy role-playing games. Gary Chalk is the inventor of the acclaimed wargame, 'Cry Havoc', and illustrator of the current bestselling fantasy game, 'Talisman'.

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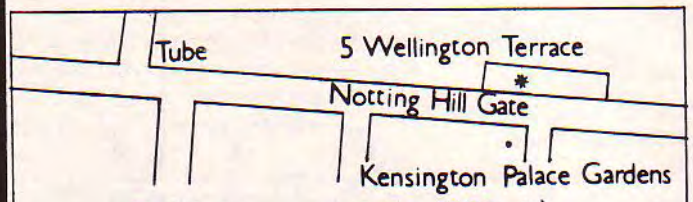

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D&D® PLAYERS ASSOCIATION NEWS

TURNBULL TALKING

We get into murky waters with part 2 of 'Patrick's Problem'. Translating the upper part of the text is pretty easy, though, so let's deal with that first on the basis discussed last time.

THE 6TH PRINCIPLE REMEMBER
ONLY THE RULES THAT DECREED ARE OBEY

The operands		The operators				
Oneness		**Truth**				

The heading of the next part is obviously **RULES**, but apart from the numbers 0-7 down the left hand side, the rules themselves are expressed in the operands, operators, etc shown above and which have so far not been defined. With the exception of rule 2, which fortunately gives a bit of a clue.

The trouble is that this bit requires some specialised knowledge. A further trouble is that this specialised knowledge manifests itself in a number of ways — I have come across it in the guise of Boolean algebra, set theory and symbolic logic, and there must be others. Fortunately the various forms are similar enough for someone with a knowledge of one to translate effectively into another.

Looking at clue 2 again, it says

' **REDUNDANT IS'**

so a particular symbol means nothing when repeated. The answers is the double negative (or the hoary old 'two negatives make a positive' as incompetent maths teachers, who should know better, erroneously say). If you say 'I'm not going to have no breakfast', your meaning is pretty obscure and your grammar even worse, but the sense of your words is that you are going to have breakfast.

So is **NOT**.

By extension, and a bit of specialist knowledge, one can derive:

is **AND** is **OR** is **IMPLIES**

is **EQUIVALENCE** is **TRUE**

is a bracket — either (or) — to make the algebra tidy.

The operands are simply luggage — let's call them A and B.

And so the rules emerge as:

0 (TRUE A AND TRUE B) IMPLIES TRUE (A AND B)
1 TRUE (A AND B) IMPLIES (TRUE A AND TRUE B)
2 NOT NOT REDUNDANT IS
3 (TRUE A IMPLIES TRUE B) IMPLIES TRUE (A IMPLIES B)
4 (TRUE A AND TRUE (A IMPLIES B)) IMPLIES TRUE B
5 (A IMPLIES B) IS EQUIVALENT TO NOT (NOT B IMPLIES NOT A)
6 (NOT A AND NOT B) IS EQUIVALENT TO NOT (A OR B)
7 (A OR B) IS EQUIVALENT TO (NOT A IMPLIES B)

Some of this may be rather heady stuff to those who haven't come across it before. Try these rather more homely versions of some of them (purists may object, but these are near enough to the real meanings).

Rule 5: I'll pay you if you work, but if you don't work you don't get paid.

Rule 7: Either I'll go to China or I'll have a curry at home; I've decided against the curry, so — Peking here I come.

Rule 4: I eat a lot of fruit; eating fruit implies good health so I am extraordinarily healthy and fit. (It just goes to show that symbolic logic deals with the premises properly but makes no judgement on their accuracy...)

Next time the solution to part 3, and the name of the winner. You may think it a trifle 'unfair' that specialist knowledge is sometimes required by tricky AD&D dungeonmasters — but all the more reason to try to get to know things, for your character's sake! ***Don Turnbull***

Press Clippings

Along with just about everything else around here, this section of the magazine has undergone something of a facelift. Most pleasurably, if you just glance across to the other page, you will see a welcome addition to **IMAGINE™** magazine, namely Ian Gibbs' cartoon strip **VOP**..... Brains, Curls, Stan and the gang will be taking up residence here from now on, having been evicted from **Dragonlords** when the latter folded. Who says we don't have a caring heart?

And while we're in the mood for innovation, we thought we'd take a look at just what it is we're trying to do with this space in the magazine; just what function it fufils. The majority of the readers of this magazine do not read fanzines, and quite a few must still remain fairly ignorant about what they are, and why anyone should bother with them.

20 Years On 9 is the latest compendium of the amateur gaming press, and it lists 70 publications involved with either FRP or postal gaming. Despite all efforts, the list is not complete. Clearly, there are quite a large number of people who find it enjoyable to produce one of these "'zines", and there must be a few more who get something out of reading them. So this month we are going to look in a little more detail at a few of them, what they are and what they do. If you find something in the contents that interests you, why not send off for a copy?

There have been a number of new releases this summer. **Infernal Desire** 1 is produced by Matt Harrison, one of many Warwick University students involved in gaming. This 'zine lines up with the postal games crowd, ie, it exists as a vehicle to keep the players of its **En Garde** variant game up to date, as well as having film and book reviews. It isn't anything special in itself, but the game variant is quite good, being set in Civil War England. Quite a few En Garde veterans might find themselves wanting to have a go at this.

No fewer than four new 'zines aimed at FRP players have been released. **Journal of the Adulterated Sanity Role-Playing Gamers** 1, and **Grim** 1 are unlikely to appeal to many gamers. There are just too few contents in either of these. **Terror Tome** 5 came with a 'free gift' of a painted figure which must have been very expensive. It has a new character class, new monsters and a competition, much the same as you would expect to find in a professional magazine, but of course produced by a young player. The best of the crop is **Shadowfire** 1, by Richard Lee, whose article **Goroghwen** appears earlier in this magazine. This is well-produced, with excellent artwork by Andrew Simpson, a better-than-average scenario, a discursive article on religion in FRPs, some reviews and a short story. Don't be put off getting this if you think that 'amateur' equates with 'poor'. In this case, it doesn't.

Many young FRP players are, it seems, setting up 'zines, and I'm sure many others who are considering trying will be interested to learn that in next month's **Press Cuttings**, Mike Lewis will be setting out a few tips for would-be editors. Mike's **Dragonlords** 22 was the last in an illustrious series. It really will be missed.

Which just leaves time for a quick mention of the other 'zines I have here in the pile. **Runestone** 3 has an article on clerics that introduces the idea of piety points — something a cleric would get for converting others to his faith, or whatever. These form the basis of a parallel xp system, so that a cleric who spends his days thumping kobolds would become a better fighter-priest as now, while someone who spent more time preaching and doing good works would be a better clerical spell caster. Nice idea. **Masters of the Prime** 13 bridges the gap between postal gaming and FRP with **En Garde** and **Diplomacy** run within. **Mad Policy** 94 & 95 have **Diplomacy** and a number of variants and other games. Once more the 'Zine Poll is upon us. **Cut & Thrust** 24 and **Take That You Fiend** 19 both cover **En Garde**, although many will find the game of **Dune** in C&T more to their liking. **Rapscallion** 5 covers a vast amount of ground, with FRP, reviews of anything that moves, and postal games of **Judge Dredd**, **Dragonsong**, **Soccer-league**, etc. **NMR!** 49, from **IMAGINE** magazine columnist Brian Creese, carries a mixture of **Diplomacy** and FRP chat. And as I have said

Dialog

***Lew Pulsipher** takes another transatlantic shot at the vagaries of RPGs, and the people who play them*

When I walked into the study to begin the morning, my Alter Ego (and right-hand man) was pacing back and forth — hard for a person his size in a 12 by 12 foot room — carrying a home-made sign that said "30 Hours Work For 40 Hours Pay!"

I laughed. 'What is this, Alter?'

'Whaddaya mean, "what is this?" ' Alter parodied. 'I'm on strike! I'm sick of working my fingers to the bone for you, Puls.'

'So you want what the sign says?'

'Yeah, how perspicacious of you.'

Perspicacious? I was tempted to tell Alter this had nothing to do with my religion, but he probably wouldn't get the joke in his present mood. 'OK, that's fine with me. You get paid nothing by the hour, so I'm happy to pay you as much for 30 hours work as 40. And you've never worked 30 hours in a week in your entire life! So you've got what you want. Now put down that silly sign and get back to the dungeon, or I'll clamp headphones on you while the radio's tuned to a "Country and Western" station.'

Alter looked rebellious for a second, but he knows who's boss. And he can't stand "Country".

******

The next day was hot outdoors — over 90 degrees equals hot hereabouts — so I retired to the dungeons of Castle Puls to read in cool, if somewhat damp, surroundings. Of course, Alter was down there in his office (he'd call it his cell) reading #12 of IMAGINE magazine during his lunch half-hour.

'Good grief, Puls, now they're even putting solo adventures in IMAGINE. And they've been praising solo 'modules' in other issues. Yecch.'

I'd read it earlier. 'It seems a decent adventure. What's wrong with solos, Alter?'

'They aren't real FRP. How can you have a role-playing game, or a role-playing adventure if you prefer, when the player has no one to interact with?'

'Well, you're still putting yourself into a role, though I can't deny that there's no personality to speak of involved.'

'There's not much of anything involved! A solo game like **Barbarian Prince** offers more, except that it isn't called a role-playing game. The heart of role-playing is interaction among the characters, isn't it?'

'Yes, for most players. But what happens about wargamers? Aren't they interested in "winning"? So why should they object to the lack of interaction, as long as they have the chance to win or lose?'

'No. Wargamers play games, Puls, and you can't play a game if there's no interaction among the participants. You don't interact significantly with a set of solo rules. There's no psychology (unless you try to devine the designer's psyche — hah), no give-and-take. It's just a specialized puzzle. Anyway, I'm a wargamer and I can't stand solos.'

'I confess, as one who comes to RPG from wargames, I can never get more than 10 minutes into a solo without getting bored. I'd quit role-playing if not for the interesting interaction among players. It'd get boring if it always came down to making the best tactical moves.'

before, the alternative to all these, if all you want to do is to play postal Diplomacy, is **Walamalaysia Gazette** 42.

For the non-aficionados, who just enjoy their gaming, and who don't know why anyone should want to write reams of material when there are perfectly good scenarios in the shops, the strangest part of the whole gaming scene must be the chatzine. Here you have something that bears no resemblance to round-the-table frp at all. **Party** 1, by a newcomer to the 'inner circle', Andy Blakeman, talks about the postal games he hopes to run (**Heroes** and **Soccerleague**), music, A-level History, **Talisman** variants, other 'zines.... In other words, its a long way from a quick run through the first few encounters in B2. Similar, although with enough issues behind it to have generated the all-important lettercol, is **Wotsit** 5. Neither of these is new reader fodder, but if you are interested to hear what other players are doing, then get hold of a copy.

Flagship 3 continues Dr Nicholas Palmer's efforts to turn postal gaming into a professional industry. Beware — this issue has the same cover as the previous two, bar the number. It's easy to miss. **War Machine** 26 and **Wargame News** 18 keep up the excellent coverage of board wargaming and computer simulations. We have also received a copy of the **Crasimoff's World Newsletter** 5 for the first time. This acts as a medium for players in the CW campaign to exchange greetings, threats, offers of employment, various and sundry items. As such it hardly rates as a 'zine, since it all seems utterly incomprehensible if you aren't involved — but then the same is probably true of any Diplomacy 'zine.... Fans of SF ought by now to be aware of the British Science Fiction Association, who produce **Vector** 119, the critical journal of the association, **Matrix** 52, the much improved newsletter, and **Paperback Inferno** 47. It's well worth becoming a member of this organisation if you want to keep up to date on new releases.

Paul Cockburn

Contact Addresses:20 Years On , Mark Billenness, 20 Winifred Rd, Coulsdon, Surrey CR3 3JA (35p); **Infernal Desire**, Matt Harrison, 34a Chandos Street, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV32 4RL (15p); **JASRPG**, R M Wilson, 7 Rozeldene, Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6TW (15p); **Grim**, Stephen Jilks, 12 Station Road, Braunton, North Devon (?); **Terror Tome**, (no contact name supplied) (20p); **Shadowfire**, Richard Lee, 226 Graham Road, Sheffield S10 3GS (60p); **Dragonlords**, Mike Lewis, Gibraltar Point, White Hill, Tackley, Oxon OX5 3AY (60p); **Runestone**, Bill Lucas, 19 Olden Mead, Lordship Estate, Letchworth, Herts SG6 2SP (50p); **Masters of the Prime**, Bryan Betts, 4a Whitefield Flats, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL (?); **Mad Policy**, Richard J Walkerdine, 144 Stoughton Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6PG (18p + postage); **Cut & Thrust**, Derek Wilson, 321 Headley Road East, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire RG5 4SE (25p + postage); **Take That You Fiend**, Kevin Warne, 48 Boscombe Avenue, Hornchurch, Essex RM11 1JG (35p); **Rapscallion**, Steve Norledge, 75 Hawkhurst Way, W Wickham, Kent (45p); **NMR!**, Brian Creese, 256 Canbury Park Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey KT2 6LG (45p); **Walamalaysia Gazette**, Dave Thorby, 200 Lavender Hill, Enfield, Middx EN2 8NJ (7p + postage); **Party**, Andy Blakeman, Springfields, Lassington Lane, Highnam, Gloucester GL2 8DH (?); **Wotsit**, Paul Mason, 24 Moor St, Earlsdon, Coventry CV5 6EQ (20p); **Flagship**, Dr Nicholas Palmer, 7 Delahay House, 15 Chelsea Embankment, London SW3 4LA (£1.75); **Crasimoff's World Newsletter**, Kevin Cropper, KJC Games, 5 Vicarage Avenue, Cleveleys, Lancs (50p); **Wargame News**, **War Machine**, Mike Costello, 17 Langbank Ave, Rise Park, Nottingham NG5 5BU (70p/£1.25); **BSFA**, Sandy Brown, 18 Gordon Terrace, Blantyre, Lanarkshire G72 9NA (membership £7pa)

VOP.... by Ian Gibbs

STAN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT INNOCENT LITTLE RABBIT?!
I'M JUST PRACTISING MY POLYMORPH SPELLS.
NO WAY! HOW CAN YOU BE SO CRUEL! DON'T YOU REALIZE YOU COULD KILL THE POOR LITTLE THING! I FORBID YOU TO POLYMORPH IT INTO ANYTHING! GO AND FIND SOMETHING ELSE TO DO!
© I. GIBBS 5/84.
VERY WELL. COME ON BRAINS, LET'S GO TO THE PUB.

'Yeah. And another thing. Solos are dull. I should think any adult and most teenagers would get bored with the things most rapidly. There aren't enough choices, there isn't enough variety, it's all so circumscribed, restricted, why should any intelligent person waste his time so?'

'If they are so boring, Alter, why are more being produced? Somebody must like them.'

'Maybe 10 year olds. But I hope IMAGINE magazine readers are a lot older than that on average. If they ever start writing it for that age, I'll quit reading it.'

'No doubt they'd regard that as a terrible loss,' I said while trying to keep a straight face. 'Some would say that playing a solo is better than, say, watching TV. That is, it helps fill the time.'

'Anyone whose mind is so barren he can't find anything better to do than that is in trouble. He can read (or re-read) magazines, read the D&D (or whatever) rules again to get ideas, design a dungeon, play a boardgame... Surely there are things more stimulating than solo adventures.'

'But don't you think solo adventures are good for introducing people to role-playing games?'

'Perhaps, but they might put off as many people as they hook. If I'd thought the D&D game was as... *sterile* as the solos are, when I started out, I'm not sure I would have bothered. It just can't match playing the game with real people. Futhermore, how many of the "unwashed" are there?'

'You mean people who know nothing about FRP?'

'Yeah, like I said, the unwashed, the benighted. I think most people have heard about the games, and can quickly pick up the rudiments from watching or from hearing about it from a friend. Why waste their time with solos?'

'Surely you don't mean you think everybody, or nearly everybody, knows something about FRPG,' I said.

'Everybody who's at all likely to enjoy playing, yes. The biggest group left is kids 'way below teen age, who're just getting old enough to understand it, and I think they'll learn about the games gradually as they get older, not from a solo adventure. Ultimately, people will know about role-playing games even before they're old enough to comprehend the written rules or read a solo adventure. Heck, every school in this country has its D&D group now — that day may already be here. When was the last time you encountered someone under 30 who didn't know what role-playing was, or couldn't have it explained in five minutes.'

'Perhaps it's different in Britain, Alter. The games got a late start there. And there are still lots of people here who have really peculiar ideas about D&D and such.'

'Solo adventures won't make any difference with that crowd. Face it, Puls, a lot of people, including most of those with confused ideas, will never become FRPers, no matter how easy it is to get involved. But you may be right about different conditions in Britain.'

'Well, I'm sure the IMAGINE editors will be glad to know you've given them the benefit of the doubt, Alter. Now quit malingering and type that paper.'

Lew Pulsipher

Notices

Burned Bush Wells

Anyone running any kind of Western RPG should nip out immediately and buy a copy of **BH4 - Burned Bush Wells**. As with all BOOT HILL® modules, there is much to plunder from it that can be applied to any rules system.

The town maps, for example, can be instantly transposed into any campaign. These are printed on the inside of the card wrap which protects the 32 page booklet. There is a colour map on the outside of the wrap, which locates Burned Bush, various ranches and the deserted town of Gordon on the campaign map supplied with the BOOT HILL game. Floor plans of the town buildings are provided in the booklet, so a couple of ready-made communities are available — and you can't have too many of those in a Western (or any other) campaign. There are also plenty of NPCs which can be converted to your system. Alternatively, just use the biographical notes for background; it will still save a lot of work.

There are nine small scenarios or encounters in the module and one larger adventure. This is a common format in BOOT HILL modules and it is good one. The small incidents can be played as set pieces or brought into a session that is running stale. Alternatively, they can be played through as part of the lead-in to the bigger adventure. A degree of imagination has gone into thinking up the scenarios and this is also evident in the decision to set the module in the middle of a very snowy winter. This alters things considerably from the norm and forces players to think hard about commonplace things like movement and shelter.

BH4 continues the honourable tradition of BOOT HILL modules. They don't get the recognition they deserve because the game is not that popular. Strange really, considering the fact that Western games are the apogee of the role-playing hobby.

Doug Cowie

The Revised DUNGEONS &

You may have noticed that TSR has recently devoted quite a lot of energy towards revising the many sets of rules it has published for various games systems. The latest to receive a facelift is the Expert Rulebook — set 2 of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game. The Expert Set enables characters to progress beyond 3rd level, the maximum attainable in the Basic Set (without which, by the way, the Expert Set cannot be played), up as high as 14th. In the process, players and DMs are introduced to life, and probably death, outside the dungeon.

Whereas the latest Basic Rulebook (there have been two previous editions), is considerably different from its predecessor, the Revised Expert Set is more a re-organisation and re-editing of the original contents. Instead of two books, as in the new Basic Set, there is a single 64-page volume.

The players' section consists mainly of expanded tables of spells, experience points, saving throws, etc for the various character classes. The most noticeable change here is that clerics have 2 extra 3rd and 4th level spells available, and magic users lose 4 each of 5th and 6th level with both classes gaining higher-level spells less quickly. Also included for each character class are guidelines on how and when a character can set up a stronghold. The section closes with some hints on adventuring outdoors, and encumbrance for each individual item carried is introduced as an optional rule.

The DM's section begins with several brief paragraphs on subjects relevant to high-level and overland play, such as special types of combat (aerial, naval, etc), magical research and NPC specialists including alchemists, armourers, sages and spies (great title for an RPG, eh?). There are also a couple of pages of rules concerning the construction of strongholds, hiring mercenaries and attracting followers. Next the rules move on to designing a 'wilderness' — this being the area surrounding the characters' home town, including terrain features, location of local dungeons, designation of areas under human and non-human control, description of home town and inhabitants, and placement of lairs.

The centre pages consist of two maps; one, a continent containing most of the locations of the B and X series modules, was not in the original set, and the other is of the Grand Duchy of Karameikos. The

Shady Dragon Inn

The DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game is a mass market game. It's the bait that lures the unsuspecting 'normal' into the meshy entanglement of hobby gaming. Surprising therefore, that TSR have not provided much in the way of support material, while the AD&D® game has nearly three times as much. When it comes to other supplementary items the ratio is even more unfavourable. **AC1 - Shady Dragon Inn** is therefore very welcome. It is a booklet of pre-generated characters for Basic and Expert rules. One swallow doesn't make a summer but at least it shows that winter is over.

AC1 consists of a 32 page booklet and a separate card cover — of which more later. 26 of the booklet's pages are given over to the stats and background of 118 non-player characters. They are arranged in groups: magic users, clerics, fighters, thieves, dwarves, elves, halflings (why doesn't TSR face facts and call them 'hobbits' like all sensible people already do?) and specials. Statistics, weapons, armour and spells are detailed along with a brief biographical sketch of each character. Surprisingly, there is no mention of treasure or adventuring equipment carried. Without this information, the characters have an unfinished look.

The beginning of each section is graced by a group drawing. Presumably the idea of this is to make the characters easier to identify with. The Specials are based on models available in TSR's line of plastic figures and generally have wimpish names like Strongheart or Warduke. The rest of the booklet is given over to an explanation of how to use it and to suggested ready-made NPC parties. Not a bad little wrinkle, the ready-made parties are listed along with stats and spells. As this information has already been provided elsewhere in the book, it is a waste of space to repeat it. Merely giving the character's names would suffice.

The card cover of AC1 opens out into a 20x17" plan of an inn (none other than Shady Dragon Inn). This is made large

DRAGONS® Expert Set

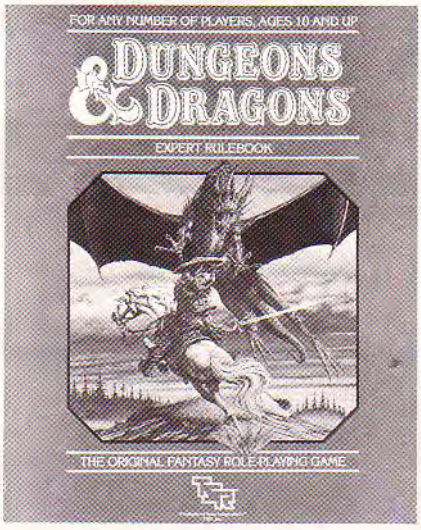
Grand Duchy, a small part of the continent, is described in the form of a sample wilderness, much as it was in the original set. What is new is the map and description of the suggested home town of Threshold, plus a page and a half of ideas for adventures set around it. One thing that is not emphasised enough is that you cannot, as a player or DM, act the same way in a town as you could in a dungeon setting — in fact the subject of towns has just one page devoted to it.

The movement rates have remained unchanged, which to my mind leaves them too slow. Underground, on foot, mapping in a dark, treacherous dungeon, the rate of 120' in 10 minutes seems slow; outdoors the 120 is read as yards — a rate of less than half a mile an hour! However, when talking in days instead of turns, the 120 is divide by 5 to give a rate of 24 miles per day, much more reasonable. Anyway, as well as movement rules there are also enlarged combat and encounter tables and a section on waterborne adventures. The monster section provides over 50 creatures with which to populate the wilderness — 13 less than in the original Expert rules. There are only pictures of four, moreover. Others would have been useful. The final part of the rules section on treasure adds to the potions, rings, scrolls, wands, rods and staves in the Basic Set, and introduces intelligent swords.

As well as the rulebook, the Expert Set includes a revised version of X1 **The Isle of Dread**. The module consists of a detailed and well thought out island adventure, with 16 new monsters and several excellent suggestions for using the island more than once. Included in the 14 maps is one of the Grand Duchy of Karameikos showing the island in relation to the continent, with a page describing the rulers and ruled of the various areas. The map gives an unfortunate impression of having had all the various racial homelands and as many varied climate and terrain types as possible crammed into a limited area.

All in all, then, the Revised Expert Set both looks and reads a lot better than the original, and if you own and regularly play Basic, sooner or later you'll want this. So far, there have been three different Basic and two different Expert sets. Since both are currently in their best form, let's hope there are no more revisions for a while.

Chris Hunter



enough to act as a playing surface for 25mm figures and includes a squared grid at a scale of 1 inch = 5 feet. Two plans are provided, ground floor and top floor. The booklet has a description of the inn which includes a note of who may be found there, the proprietor, the staff, facilities and prices. Good stuff. It would be even better if space had not been wasted on needlessly reprinting stats of suggested party members and, instead, some small encounters at the Inn had been added.

AC1 is not one of those things that you must have. However, for the D&D DM just starting to broaden the scope of her (or his) game, it is handy to have a large number of reasonably well fleshed out NPCs available, either to give random encounters more depth or as a basis for working out major NPCs. Shady Dragon Inn makes an acceptable adventurer's base and its inclusion makes AC1 an above-average accessory. Worth considering.

Doug Cowie

Product information

***BH4** (£3.95), **AC1** (£3.95) and **The Revised D&D Expert Set** (£9.50) are from TSR UK Ltd, The Mill, Rathmore Rd, Cambridge.*

***The Keep** (£16.95) is from Mayfair Games, distributed in this country by Games Workshop, 27/29 Sunbeam Rd, London NW10 6JP.*

The Keep

Deep in Transylvania, inside a Keep built to imprison him, is Molasar, the original vampire. A detachment of German troops, stationed in the Keep to guard a pass, disturb him. If Molasar can build up his power by killing all the Germans, he will be strong enough to escape his prison.... possibly to bring the whole world under his grip of terror.

However, all is not lost, because several people are striving to kill Molasar. If they are successful; if they can find the Hilt, Molasar's weakness, and use it to eliminate him, then the world will be saved.

The game **The Keep**, based upon the film of the same name, depicts this conflict: one of the players controls Molasar, and the others (from 2-5 of them) control the searchers, looking for the Hilt in one of the Keep's dungeon rooms. The game is played on a jigsaw board, which warps if you are not very careful, using plastic pawns and several small packs of cards. Dice are used to regulate movement, and cards are played and the numbers on them compared to resolve conflicts.

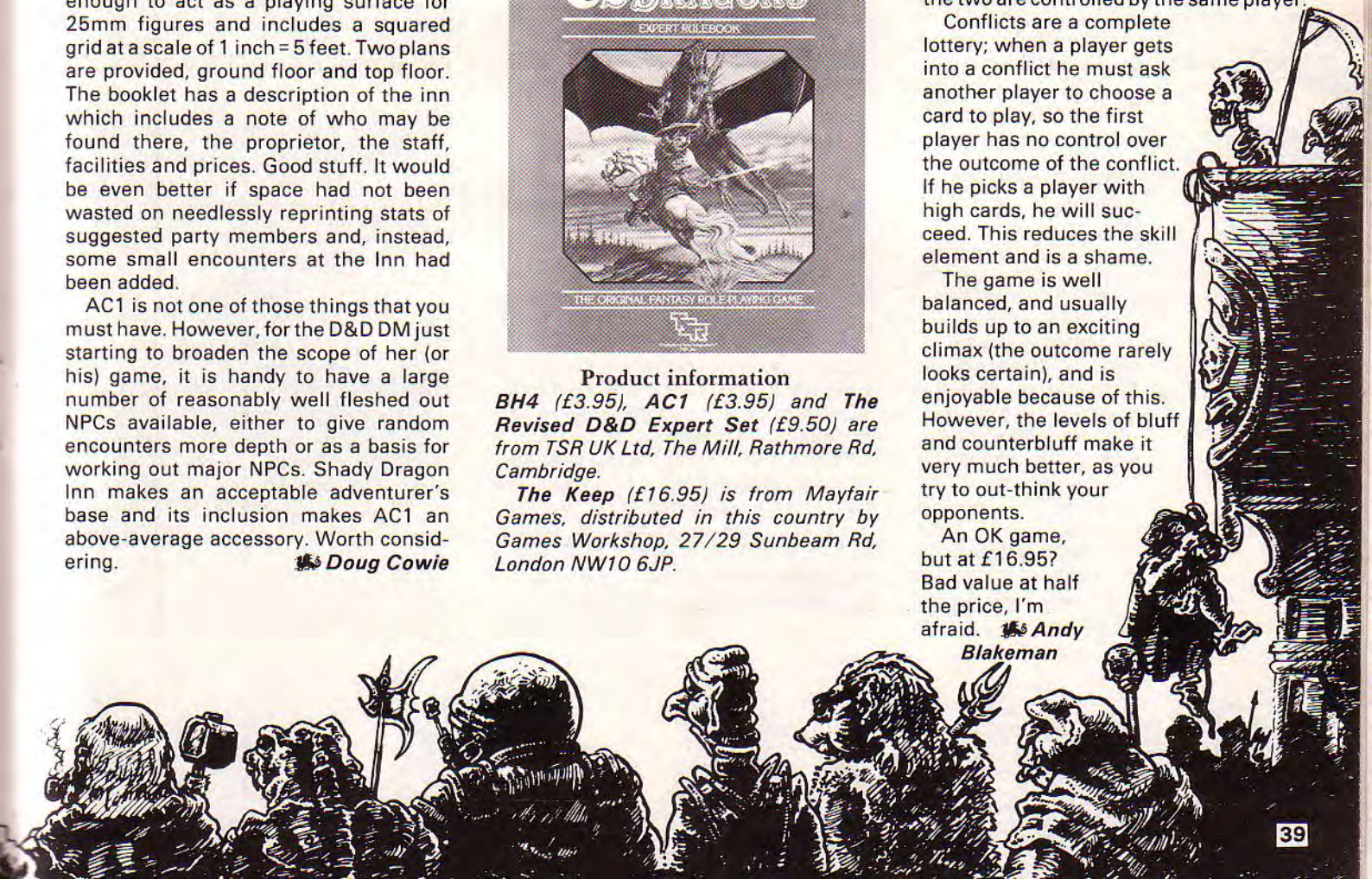
A quirk of the game is that Molasar controls the movements of the German guards — in the book and film he doesn't. This can only be explained in terms of the Germans acting to prevent the intruders (the searchers) getting in, and as this is also Molasar's aim, it is reasonable that the two are controlled by the same player.

Conflicts are a complete lottery; when a player gets into a conflict he must ask another player to choose a card to play, so the first player has no control over the outcome of the conflict. If he picks a player with high cards, he will succeed. This reduces the skill element and is a shame.

The game is well balanced, and usually builds up to an exciting climax (the outcome rarely looks certain), and is enjoyable because of this. However, the levels of bluff and counterbluff make it very much better, as you try to out-think your opponents.

An OK game, but at £16.95? Bad value at half the price, I'm afraid.

Andy Blakeman



Notices

Clear Hex Overlays

What's the difference between the casual games player and the hobbyist? Well, I'd suggest that you've probably become a hobbyist when you start to acquire those mysterious icons called "accessories". Impedimenta is the sign of the devotee.

Standard Games & Publications, as well as publishing top selling games like **Cry Havoc!** and **Siege**, also produce a large range of accessories. Let us consider their **Transparent Hex Overlays** . These are simply sheets of clear acetate, overprinted with the hexagonal grid which is so much a part of gaming folklore.

The sheets are 18x25" which gives a gridded area of A2 size with a small blank border all round. I had two different sheets to consider, with different sized hexes. One has standard sized hexes, (16mm across) each one being individually identifiable by a letter/number code. They are arranged in a 'short-grained' format which is to say that they run in columns from long side to long side. To complete the statistics, there are 43 hexes by 23 and the acetate is of a thin gauge. The other sheet has hexes 25mm across, uncoded and arranged long-grained (columns running from short edge to short edge). The acetate is of the same gauge as the first sheet. In most circumstances it is perfectly durable but it can crease if roughly handled (such as travelling between Cambridge and Liverpool in a Jiffy Bag). Once a crease occurs it cannot be smoothed away — you are stuck with it.

The printing on both sheets is good, resisting my attempts to remove it using both water and neat alcohol. A similar American product I tried some years ago succumbed to the neat alcohol test; its hexes dissolving into a smeary mess. One up to Standard Games.

The overlays are also useful. Placed over ordinary maps, they provide an instant movement grid enabling, for instance, O S maps to be used as campaign maps. Budding designers can work out their own maps directly onto the overlay

Combat Shield & Mini-adventure

Hard on the heels of **AC1 - Shady Dragon Inn**, comes **AC2 - Combat Shield & Mini-adventure** for the D&D® game. Looks nice, no doubt about that. They've obviously got a real artist to do the cover art (I knew they'd find one sooner or later) and he or she has produced a picture of three monsters on the cover which is the best I've seen. Hitherto, no matter how fearsome the text told us a monster was, the illustrations always lacked credibility. They have never looked remotely intimidating and more often have seemed ludicrous or hilarious, the original **Monster Manual** cover being a prime example. Things have been improving steadily but the creatures on AC2's cover are the first that look as though they really are living beasts.

The "Combat Shield" part of the package is what is usually called a Referee's Screen, behind which a referee can shuffle through the confidential gaming bureaucracy without sneaky players seeing what's afoot. Various useful charts and tables from the D&D Basic and Expert rules are reproduced on the inside of the screen to facilitate easy reference by the DM. Screens thus fulfil two functions and are quite handy devices. This one is up to standard — the choice of tables printed on the DM's side of it seem sensible. The designers have made a valiant effort to create a single "To Hit" table which encompasses all levels of all character classes. They have succeeded but the result is a table quite difficult to read. I advise users to improve the quick reference characteristics of this table by drawing lines across from the "Character Level" portion to the "Target's Armour Class" portion.

Most screens provide some information for the players on their side of the device, which makes sense as it helps to cut down on the papers that litter the table. Of the three surfaces available on this screen (it is equivalent in size to three A4 sheets joined along their long sides) only one has player info on it. The other two carry the cover art and a couple of paragraphs of hype. OK, I accept the

Felt Hex Cloth

From Standard Games and Publications comes **Felt Hex**. This is a big, plush relative of the hex overlays. It is a piece of felt, such as is used on billiard tables, 75½x48" with a short grained hex grid printed on one side. The hexes are each 25mm across and there are 46.5x82 of them. It is available in green, sand, black or blue. The black one is excellent for playing SF space ship combat board games on, if you wish to substitute models for the card counters. Similarly the blue ones are good for naval board games. The land coloured ones are less useful. A tiny percentage of wargamers use hex movement for miniature figure battles so there is no significant market there. Role-playing gamers may find Felt Hex pleasant for wilderness games but the inability to draw buildings, dungeons and terrain features on the surface is a serious drawback. I have used mine blank side up as a playing surface for wilderness games which means that the cost of printing the hex grid is wasted.

Felt hex looks nice and is well produced. Uses can be found for it, particularly the black and blue versions. It all hinges on the price. Hang onto your hats people. £12.95. Conclusion: spend the 95p on a piggy bank and put the £12 inside it until you see something you really need.

Doug Cowie

while at what we may call the tactical level, the overlay makes a good movement surface for model figures. The 25mm hex sheet is particularly suitable for this, making movement and missile fire easy to conduct. Buildings and terrain features can be drawn directly onto the acetate as and when they are required. Either chinagraph pencils or water based overhead projector pens are suitable for this. I'm sure there are many more uses that the ingenious gamer can develop. Hex overlays are very handy aids assuming a reasonable price is asked for them. At £1.80, Standard Games' product is good value. Well worth having.

Doug Cowie

illustration but the hype could have been left out and something useful like a copy of the aforementioned "To Hit" table printed. As it is, the only information that the poor players get to look at is details of how many experience points they need to gain a level. I should have thought that that would be more frustrating than informative in the middle of a game!

The mini-adventure is rather good. It is designed to be fitted into an existing campaign when the right moment occurs but is nevertheless well detailed, original and carefully thought out.

The adventure alone is worth the price of this accessory; the shield, if you look upon it as a bonus, is reasonably useful.

Doug Cowie

Startown Liberty

Startown Liberty, a **Traveller** play-aid from Gamelords, is set in the rough and tough district that adjoins any major starport, a place the Traveller universe calls Startown. The booklet is not intended to present the referee with a full worked out district. It is more a series of detailed encounter tables for the referee to insert into gaming periods.

The tables can be used in many ways. They cover general encounters, various drinking establishments and a set of criminal encounters. The criminal encounters section is particularly useful, as it expands on streetwise skills, allowing streetwise to be used in a more realistic manner, with a chance of being arrested.

The tables can be used in many ways. They can break up a campaign. This is of particular use when one is following a closely choreographed plot. The players have a tendency to note down all information, in all situations. By using Startown Liberty one can pull them off the scent and allow more important facts to be presented in an 'off the cuff' manner. The booklet can also be used as a means to introduce scenarios, better than that old one 'a man comes up to you in a bar and says...'. Furthermore in a science fiction campaign the referee has a lot of ground to cover and often things happen that he just hasn't taken into account. Startown Liberty can thus function as a stop-gap whilst the referee thinks his way out of a situation.

Startown Liberty is not a full scenario, it is a play-aid. As such it is really useful to a referee and it can be used over and over again.

Stephen Nutt

Product information:

AC2 *(£4.50) is from TSR UK Ltd, The Mill, Rathmore Rd, Cambridge CB1 4AD.*

Clear Hex Overlays *(£1.80) and* ***Felt Hex Cloth*** *(£12.95) are from Standard Games & Publications, Arlon House, Station Road, Kings Langley, Herts. See* ***Illuminations*** *on page 43 for news about Felt Hex Cloths.*

Battlemats *(£9.95) from Berkeley Games are distributed in this country by Games Workshop, 27/29 Sunbeam Rd, London NW10 6JP.*

Startown Liberty*, is a Traveller play-aid from Gamelords Ltd in the USA. At the time of going to press, there was no UK distributor.*

These addresses are given for information only; the products should be available from games shops.

Battlemats

Those of us already up to our eyeballs in plastic hex sheets, paper hex sheets, felt hex cloths, floor plans and cast resin dungeon models may feel there is little call for another type of commercial playing surface. The Berkeley Games Company of California disagree however, and have produced **Battlemats**.

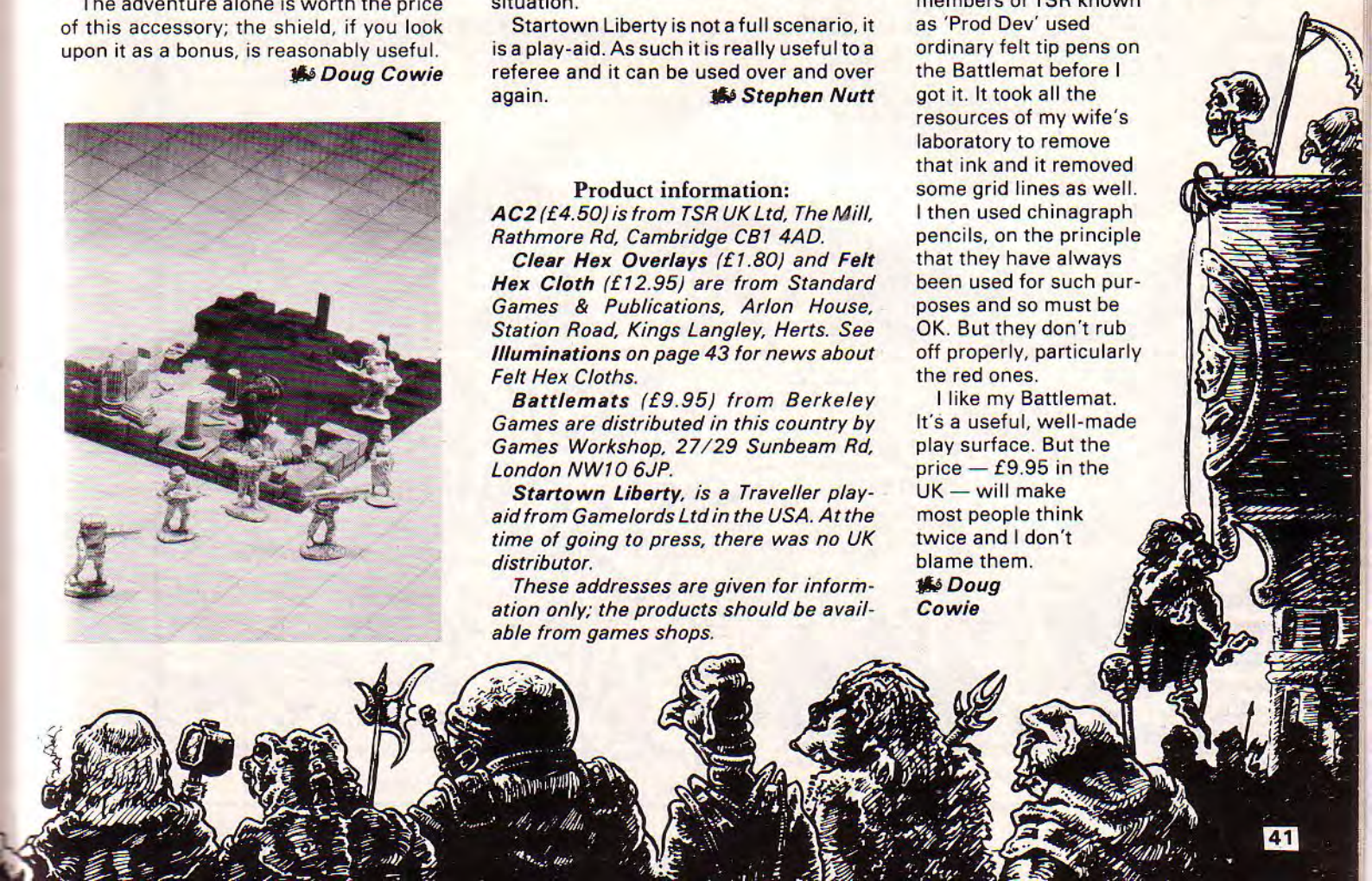
These are in various shapes and formats but the one I've been looking at is a piece of soft vinyl, 26x23", backed by some cloth to make it non-slippery, and overprinted with 1" squares. The surface is a muted sandy colour that is easy on the eye, and will take water-based inks (as found in overhead projector pens) which can be wiped clean with a damp cloth.

The idea is familiar: floor plans, dungeons, caverns or whatever are drawn on the surface as they are encountered and removed when play passes on. Trouble with this is that plans drawn in the midst of a game generally look untidy and slipshod. If your Battlemat is prepared in advance it can look very nice but then play is limited to the area drawn and the element of surprise is lost — the players can see everything immediately. I found it very good for doing building floor plans; several can be fitted on if you don't include the streets and intervening ground. Although designed for 25mm figures it is fine for other scales.

It is essential to follow the instructions about the type of pen to use. Some members of TSR known as 'Prod Dev' used ordinary felt tip pens on the Battlemat before I got it. It took all the resources of my wife's laboratory to remove that ink and it removed some grid lines as well. I then used chinagraph pencils, on the principle that they have always been used for such purposes and so must be OK. But they don't rub off properly, particularly the red ones.

I like my Battlemat. It's a useful, well-made play surface. But the price — £9.95 in the UK — will make most people think twice and I don't blame them.

Doug Cowie



GAME COMPANY

Clubs

On this page we will help you advertise your club, or appeal for other gamers to help found a new club in your area, free of charge. Just write to IMAGINE magazine, The Mill, Rathmore Rd, Cambridge if you wish to place a notice, or reply to a Club Ref.

First this month, thanks to Andy Norman of the RPG club in **HORSHAM** for letting us know that our information about them in issue 12 was out of date. The club now meets weekly at players homes in the Horsham/Guildford area to play only the AD&D game. Players aged 21+ are welcomed to write to Andy — 69 Swaines Way, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 0AN — for more details.

The **REDDITCH BARBARIANS** meet every other Thursday 4.00-9.00pm at Redditch Palace Theatre, Alcester Street to play all kinds of RPGs and wargames. Contact Richard Eaton, 154 Exhall Close, Church Hill, Redditch B98 9JA; Tel Redditch 64860.

BARRY RPG CLUB is in need of new players to join games of **Aftermath, Cthulhu, DragonQuest, Daredevils, Bushido, Space Opera** and wargames. *'Experience is not essential but reliability is'*. Anyone interested, male or female, ring John or Sandy at Barry 746138.

Geoff Haynes is starting a D&D group in the **Rutland area, THE BESERKERS**. As well as D&D and AD&D games, the existing four would gladly try other games systems. *'Our style of play tends on the treacherous and chaotic with the occasional lapse into lawfulness'*. Anyone welcome so long as they can stand being killed! Contact Geoff at 7 Wreake Walk, Oakham, Leics for more details.

Finally, D Steel of **PETERBOROUGH** is a **Traveller** player who would like to meet others (aged 16+) — though he is willing to try other RPGs. Contact him at 46 Swanspool, Ravensthorpe, Peterborough PE3 7LS; Tel Peterborough 266909

Events

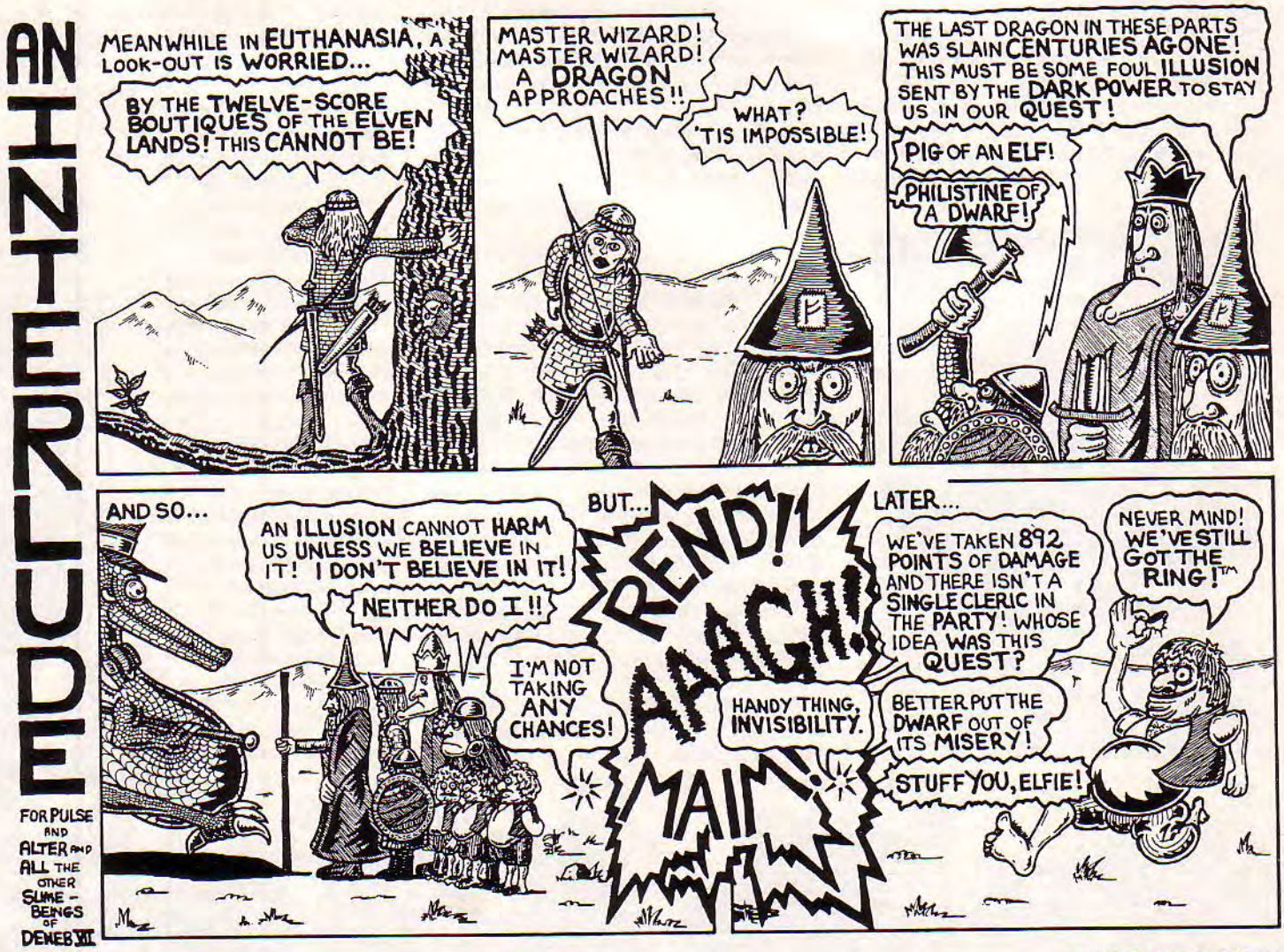
Organisers of role-playing events should take care to inform us at least TWO MONTHS in advance, for free publicity in these pages.

This month we start with **Manorcon** in BIRMINGHAM, organised by and for Diplomacy players. Details: Pete Calcraft, 25 Garners Lane, Davenport, Stockport.

July 20-23 finds **Albacon** in GLASGOW, details of which appear at the end of Pete Tamlyn's **Seacon** report on p48.

The weekend after that, on Saturday 28 July, **Dragonmeet** takes place in Central Hall, WESTMINSTER. Entrance £1.00, plenty of opportunity for playing RPGs.

***Oxcon** (Aug 24-27) and **Novacon** (Nov 9-11), are noted in Pete's report; others – **Mythcon** (Sept 7-9), **ConQuest** (Oct 12-14), **Midcon** (Nov 9-11), etc – appeared last issue. We didn't have details of **Games Day** last month, but we now do: Sept 1-2, at the Royal Horticultural Hall, Greycoat St, LONDON.*


AN INTERLUDE
MEANWHILE IN EUTHANASIA, A LOOK-OUT IS WORRIED...
BY THE TWELVE-SCORE BOUTIQUES OF THE ELVEN LANDS! THIS CANNOT BE!
MASTER WIZARD! MASTER WIZARD! A DRAGON APPROACHES!!
WHAT? 'TIS IMPOSSIBLE!
THE LAST DRAGON IN THESE PARTS WAS SLAIN CENTURIES AGONE! THIS MUST BE SOME FOUL ILLUSION SENT BY THE DARK POWER TO STAY US IN OUR QUEST!
PIG OF AN ELF!
PHILISTINE OF A DWARF!
AND SO...
AN ILLUSION CANNOT HARM US UNLESS WE BELIEVE IN IT! I DON'T BELIEVE IN IT!
NEITHER DO I!!
I'M NOT TAKING ANY CHANCES!
BUT...
REND!
AAAGH!
MAIM!
LATER...
WE'VE TAKEN 892 POINTS OF DAMAGE AND THERE ISN'T A SINGLE CLERIC IN THE PARTY! WHOSE IDEA WAS THIS QUEST?
HANDY THING, INVISIBILITY.
BETTER PUT THE DWARF OUT OF ITS MISERY!
STUFF YOU, ELFIE!
NEVER MIND! WE'VE STILL GOT THE RING!™
FOR PULSE AND ALTER AND ALL THE OTHER SLIME-BEINGS OF DENEB VII

ILLUMINATIONS

Fellow Travellers

For several years now, there has been no lack of people prepared to write off GDW's **Traveller** SF RPG as being out of date. Newer systems which are perhaps more complete or have neater combat rules or maybe more realistic handling of skills, have been cited as certain to oust the elderly Traveller game. GDW have steadfastly ignored such protestations. They have continually added to, modified and embellished the game and they have done so with some excellent supplementary material. Just completed is **Aslan** (Alien Module 1). This includes complete rules on Aslan character generation plus the necessary information to handle the alien Aslan culture in gaming terms. Also included is a comprehensive adventure which involves human characters venturing into Aslan territory. Some of the players will get the opportunity to run Aslan characters in this adventure. Alien Module 2, **K'Kree**, is under preparation and this will provide the same details for the Centaurs of the Imperium's borders as AM1 does for the Aslans.

The **Alien** modules will be the first to be produced in a new physical format. This will feature a large booklet enclosed in a full colour folder which will have the module's maps and charts on it. Just like a TSR module in fact. GDW say that this format enables them to give almost as many components as in their earlier, boxed products, but at an appreciably lower price. Currently they are talking of $6 each.

Another Traveller adventure under preparation is **The Secret of the Ancients.** No details on this one yet.

GDW are feeling pleased with themselves for other reasons at the moment. The prestigious Smithsonian Institution has decided to feature Traveller prominently at a games exhibition they are planning. Respectability with a capital R.

Work is proceeding apace on GDW's new fantasy RPG called **Liege Lord**. Apart from the magic system (which is causing some problems) most of the design work is complete. GDW are particularly pleased with the combat rules which, they claim, are 'simple and fast moving, but elegant'. It is said to be equally suitable for 'pencil and paper' play or for full blooded fights with model figures. There will also be detailed rules for the economic necessities which no adventurer can ignore, plus a chapter on campaign design.

Doug Cowie

Expensive Skirt Gets the Chop

The name of Standard Games & Publications crops up frequently in this column. This is not because I am a shareholder of theirs — I wish I was. Rather, it is because they regularly bring out new products and, most importantly, they take the trouble to tell such as me well in advance. John Maitland is the man who makes things happen down at Standard's Hertfordshire HQ. The other day, in between hectic export-promoting trops, he had a few minutes to spare which he utilised by having A Good Idea. It occurred to him that Standard's **Felt Hex Cloths** were rather expensive. This is the same conclusion that I reached when I reviewed them for IMAGINE magazine (p40). Obviously, if his own perceptions coincided with the Olympian judgement handed down from this magazine, something must be done. The problem is that the felt itself is expensive material so there is little room for manoeuvre. However, the product is very popular with those who can afford it, particularly for role-playing wilderness adventures. Time and again at gaming conventions, John noticed that enthusiastic Felt Hex users were only utilising about half of the cloth's surface, the rest of it an expensive skirt dangling over the edge of the table. Enter the Good Idea. Cut the Cloths in half and sell them at more or less half price. Simple, but it takes a someone who is in touch with the market and who is prepared to be flexible, to think of and implement it. Disapproval from such a weighty source as an IMAGINE review was an added spur, of course.

Horn of Avalon

The mainstream Avalon Hill company has some newies of note. There is **Lords of Creation** which is a role-playing game. It can be set in the past, present or future which certainly promises to cut the restraining shackles from adventurous referees. Price is £10.95. There is a simultaneous release for LoC's first expansion module. This is **Horn of Roland** (£7.95) which is designed for beginning players to start on their epic journey towards achieving Lord of Creation status. From the title one assumes this is a Carolingian caper but such details have not, as yet, been vouchsafed to me.

Avalon Hill obviously think that they are far enough committed to role-playing to bring out their own magazine on the subject. **Heroes** is that magazine (according to the *Guardian*, it is also the name of a gay club in Manchester but that may be just a coincidence). In its bi-monthly pages you won't find 'vague, generic articles on how to be a GM, reviews of last year's games or inaccurate gossip'. Well, that's a relief but what will you find? 'Solid, playable adventures, new rules for the games you already own and colourful playing aids...'. And, of course, boastful advertising hype plus AH's deadpan allegiance to the myth of their own inherent superiority. Available now, £2.50 per copy.

Quality Quarterly

Issue 3 of **Tortured Souls** finally appeared. This is the magazine that is devoted entirely to publishing scenarios and adventures for role-playing games. When it became apparent that the third issue was going to be late, I wondered if my worst fears had been realised. Had they found it impossible to get sufficient quantities of the right quality material? Happily, this is not the case. The delay was due to production difficulties, of which more later.

This issue has four complete scenarios. There is also a detailed introduction to the Zhalindor campaign with a guide to anyone who wants to set up and run the campaign themselves. Each issue of TS contains material directly relating to Zhalindor which referees can slot into their version of the campaign. In this issue, in addition to the introduction, there is a Zhalindor town adventure to bring players into the campaign. There is also a very attractive, separate map of the campaign area in full colour. In fact, it was the production of this map that delayed the appearance of #3. Beast Enterprises, the publishers of TS, have recognised that if they wish to maintain a bi-monthly publishing schedule, they must either take on more staff or employ the services of a wholesaler to handle the distribution of the mag. Either of these two options would necessitate increasing the cover price of TS. Beast are not prepared to increase their price, so they have decided to go quarterly instead. They have other projects maturing nicely and if these are a success, the extra revenue generated may allow them to return to a bi-monthly TS at the current price. This is something for 1985. In the meantime, TS is now definitely on a quarterly schedule.

*More **Illuminations** appear overleaf* ›

ILLUMINATIONS Extra!

SAVE YOUR DOLLARS TO SAVE THE WORLD

There has been a tiny flood of computer games this month, several of which fall into the adventure games category. **Strategic Simulations Inc** (SSI) of California produce some of the best games for computers. The drawbacks are that they are only for American machines (Apple, Commodore 64 and Atari); they are only available on disc, and by the time they arrive in the UK they cost almost as much as some British computers (don't expect to pay less than £40 per game). If you have got the financial clout, here are the titles to look out for: **Geopolitique 1990** puts the player in the role of the President of the US in the 1990s. As such s/he has to deal with all the economic, diplomatic and political problems that face the leader of a superpower. World domination may be achieved by these means alone but if things go wrong, the game proceeds from the 'Geopol' phase to the 'Geowar' phase which deals in detail with a full range of conventional war possibilities.

If all this seems to be a little too close to home for comfort, the harrassed player can unwind with **Cosmic Balance** which involves designing and fighting with starship fleets. Plenty of design options on weapons, hulls, equipment and crew are offered. For one or two players, games last from 10 minutes.

The third SSI title is role-playing with a difference. **50 Mission Crush** requires the player to take the character of a pilot of a B17 bomber in WW2. The player selects a crew and has to decide between relative sizes of bomb and fuel loads. Once in the air, combat and flying decisions have to be made and the effectiveness of each mission is assessed by the computer which will award points to the player. These points contribute towards medals and promotion. Survive the magical 50 missions and you make Brigadier and earn a Certificate of Achievement from SSI into the bargain.

Microcomputer Games, a division of Avalon Hill, also have a number of interesting titles in the 'just released' section. **Space Cowboy** is an arcade style game for one player which involves escaping from a futuristic prison, running the gauntlet of robot lasers over a narrow walkway and escaping to a waiting starship. Stamina and speed are variables which have to be taken into account.

Of a less hectic but, perhaps, more absorbing nature is **Free Trader** which is a simulation freelance commerce way in the future. The trader has to stock up on suitable goods for the myriad possible markets (after conducting necessary market research). Combat cannot be ignored either because, inevitably, there is always the danger of meeting raiders from the Thoth Empire.

Jupiter Mission 1999 could handle a Blockbuster tag with consumate ease. It comes on four discs and is designed to 'test the creative imagination of the advanced computer gamer'. It is an adventure game that also includes sophisticated arcade game segments and 'mystifying puzzles'. One of these puzzles is what the extensive and tedious game summary on the advertising literature is all about. Rendered down into one sentence, it seems that the player is confronted with the necessity of saving the Earth from destruction. No matter how ingenious games get, the plots don't change much, do they?

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b) Without bothering to look, you attack the nearest bush with your trusty sword. A very angry looking, large hairy creature emerges, holding his rear end with one hand and a book called **Beyond the Wall of Tears**, one of the many solo adventures available with **Tunnels & Trolls** role-playing system, in the other.

The creature advances, menacingly. Your blows are useless (you already hit its one vulnerable spot). Terror stricken, you cringe before the behemoth, ready for death to strike.

"Look luv", it says, "if you want to borrow my copy you'll just have to wait till I'm finished".

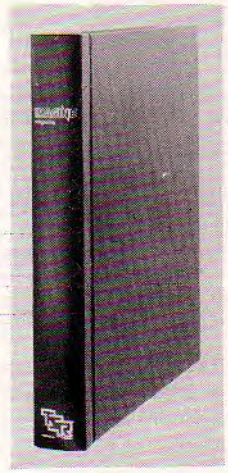
Amazed, you back away from the scene. To avoid any further such confrontations, you resolve to buy **Tunnels & Trolls** from your nearest retailer.

FLYING BUFFALO

P.O. Box 100, Bath Street,
Walsall, W. Midlands.

IMAGINE™ magazine binders

A WARNING



Now, see here. It's quite clear to us, that a few of you 'reader' chappies are not treating your copies of **IMAGINE** magazine in a fit manner, don't you know. They're being left on tables, under beds, and in all sorts of simply *ghastly* places that don't bear thinking about.

And yet, those simply spiffing types at TSR have quite a number of their rather wizard binders, in a blue quite like a summer's day, with the old name on and everthing, what? Seems a pretty poor show when a chap can't be trusted to look after his magazines, so don't delay, post the coupon today! Oh, and before I forget, you decent coves who already have one, will need another one soon, because they only hold twelve at a time. OK? Whacko....

Send me.....binders, at £2.95 + £1 postage and packing. I enclose payment of .....

(PA *members* — pay no postage. Please quote your membership number .....

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Send to: TSR UK Ltd, The Mill, Rathmore Road, CAMBRIDGE CB1 4AD.

CHAINMAIL by Brian Creese

A bi-monthly feature about the postal gaming hobby

THE COMMERCIAL PBM GAMES

Episode 2: And so it transpired....

In #14 of IMAGINE magazine I explained that I have enlisted the help of a few friends to play a selection of the commercial pbm (play-by-mail) games, each set in a very different world. This time I shall tell you a little more about three of these games.

Starmaster, from Mitre Games, is one of the most talked about of all the pbm games, and rightly so, since it has such a wide scope. As explained last time, Steve Doubleday had the task of creating a home planet and an alien life-form. The result was the Empire of Meinhof on the world of Bannorth, and the creatures were called Rokkor. Bannorth itself is a cold, cheerless world covered in methane ice, with a solar system which looks Sol standard.

The Rokkor have an individualistic type of brain pattern, and since they inhabit a high-gravity methane world, they are methane-breathers. They have a clear crystalline armour through which their internal organs can be seen; they move around like three-legged crabs and have a tripodal bias, with three sets of gravity, radiation and ocular sensory groups. The first thing anyone would notice is that they have an absolutely massive claw extending to the rear which is capable of cutting a man in two. They are earth-human in intelligence, and imperialistic by inclination.

Steve soon discovered the price to be paid for the massive natural armament of the claw — the ground military forces of the Bannorth had barely progressed as far as mortars and gatling guns! Another consequence, this time of the large planet, was a huge population and production base, allowing thirty cruisers to be built each turn. Still, it might be better to face the massed Rokkor fleets; after all, who would want to meet them for some hand-to-hand stuff, eh?

If **Crasimoff's World** holds creatures like the Rokkor, then thankfully I have yet to meet them. My experience of this world so far has been based solidly in a medieval technology, though one wonders about those Astoffs — the semi-legendary rulers of a past age. The party I created consisted of a chief, six fighters, two mages and a priest, and I named them the Walkerdines, after their leader, the great and intrepid Richard the Walker. They started off in the town of Terragraman, a community which specialised in the study of herbs and drugs. They set off to the Haunts mountains in the hope of meeting Astoffs and learning more about these ancient people. Mostyn, the priest, proves quickly useful in discovering the rare Cure Wounds plant, and the party also encounters a strange rock-like creature called a wobbler. Most exciting, however, was meeting with a party of the Astoffs, and trading with them, although no real understanding was gained. On reaching a deserted-looking cliff-top house The Walkerdines met another party, the Reives, with whom they shared camp before moving northwards.

Crasimoff's World showers you with paper — each town has its own information slip, as does each spell or artifact. We are even given 'real' money, in the form of paper Oraks to trade with. Another excellent feature of the game is the occasional appearance of a Crasimoff's World Newsletter to keep the players in touch with each other and to tell you about the 'leading' parties.

Nick Shears has been playing **Warboids' World**, a game set in the distant future where computers and robots have wiped out mankind.

Character considerations do not really come into it when you are assuming the role of a 'subterranean industrial complex' (STIC); so the first moves involved checking the surface via the sensors still intact there. Nick found a couple of wandering boids (warlike robots) in the vicinity, and knew they were likely to be under the control of another STIC.

The long term aim of the game is to join battle successfully with enemy boids, and ultimately to close down other STICs. To do this, considerably more boids are needed than the handful in store when the game starts, so Nick expended some of his limited energy in capturing these wandering boids by remote control. Further energy was used to reactivate some of the factories which could, in turn, be used to build further boids and power generators. The latter can be used to build more factories, and so on....

The sensors in Nick's territory did not quite cover every hex, so he set out to fill the gaps, fearful lest an enemy boid slip through to within proximity of, say, the entrance to his short tunnel. Whilst doing this, a couple of boids did wander through, but disappeared out of range before they could be captured or killed.

Another task needed in the first move was to dig a tunnel to the surface, through which boids could be moved out of storage and into use. Another tunnel was started immediately which would come out on the border of an adjacent STIC's territory, though it will be a few more turns yet before any contact is made with more boids from any other STIC.

So there you have the latest news from the games. In the final article in this series, I shall present the verdict of my little reviewing panel on the commercial pbm games, individually and as a group.

Brian Creese

***Starmaster** (and **Tribes of Crane**): Mitre Games, Lothlorien, 77 Burntwood Grange Road, Wandsworth Common, London SW18*

***Warboids World**: Roger Trethewey, 39 Chapman Avenue, Maidstone, Kent*

***Crasimoff's World**: KJC Games, 5 Vicarage Avenue, Cleveleys, Lancs*

*Kevin Cropper of KJC phoned **IMAGINE** magazine with the news that Crasimoff's World has just been exported to the USA, which he believes to be the first time that this has happened. Congratulations to him and all those responsible.*

Letters

*Here we are again with a sample of the letters received here at **IMAGINE** magazine in the last month. There seem to have been more than ever, so we have expanded the space to get more of them in. If you have anything at all to say that other gamers might want to hear, write to: **IMAGINE magazine (letters)**, The Mill, Rathmore Road, Cambridge.*

Even this far on we are still receiving comments about #13, which a great many people seem to be saying was the sort of magazine they really want. Here are a few more views:

Steve Jones, Birmingham: Comments on #13:

Mirror of Nitocris — An excellent pastiche. It captures all the best parts of the original (suspense, creepy nasties) without all the tedium and predictable endings.

Character Classes — So far, I'm not impressed. Barbarians have been done before, and done better. This version has a whole host of illogical abilities. Why can a barbarian hit creatures that need magical weapons to hit, without magical weapons? It seems that the AD&D® game is falling behing the rest of the gaming industry as far as innovation is concerned.

Dialog — I have usually found this thought-provoking. It seems Lew can write good articles when he is not trying to write down to beginners.

Cartoons — Please either get some better cartoons or drop them altogether.

This is the first issue of **IMAGINE** magazine I have bought rather than borrowed, because of the **Call of Cthulhu** material. Please continue to cover non-TSR games occasionally (and more than occasionally!).

Steve Norledge, West Wickham, Kent: Issue 13 was good, although probably not so good for WHS distribution. Paul's article on Lovecraft was very good — getting well away from the usual, somewhat clinical style of reviewing authors and their works.

Marie Patterson, Turners Hill, Sussex: I'm just writing to say how much I enjoyed Issue 13. *Wonderful* Dave Carson artwork. He has to be one of the most original and spooky British talents around. The same goes for the Steve Jones stuff — he's not Virgil Finlay, but he's good.

Great articles for we Cthulhupoid fans

I do like Mr Lumley's work, although I didn't think this was his best. It was hard to see whether or not he was meaning to be serious.

Richard Colvin, Leamington Spa: Issue 13 was, if anything, even better than issue 12. I liked the article on the **Cthulhu** game, and would like to see more like this. The **Mirror of Nitocris** was the best piece of fiction I have read so far in **IMAGINE** magazine. The article on Lovecraft was good background, and interesting too.

Darklaw and **Solstice at Castle Falkens** were quite good, although I don't play the Cthulhu system and the latter was a little bare.

The article by Gary Gygax and Len Lakofka was very good, especially as it is non-official(!) However, the 5% bonus per level is something that I and many other DMs have been doing for years. Also, I cannot see why extra experience should be given for magic items (assuming that is what 'magic carried and employed' refers to) used by NPCs or monsters, in addition to the xps for finding such an item, as given in the DMG.

*I suppose it's because there is a world of difference between finding a **wand of cruise missiles** in a cupboard, and having one let off at you. Thanks to everyone who wrote in about our thirteenth issue, and be assured, we will return to the **Call of Cthulhu** game again before too many aeons.*

The last word, then, on that issue:

Tony Hitchens, Lancaster: Having just read the review of **Mercenaries, Spies & Private Eyes**, I cannot help but feel that Nick Davison was a little harsh in his criticism. What he seemed to neglect is the sheer scope of **MS&PE**; the game could deal with such diverse characters as hard-core detectives like Mike Hammer, Sam Spade, etc, or the larger-than-life adventures of Doc Savage, Indiana Jones or the Avengers.

Comparing MS&PE with **Espionage** is unfair, as the latter only concerns itself with hard-core spy operations. Hence the lack of gunplay in **Border Crossing**; real spies do not have mass gun battles in Eastern bloc countries. The MS&PE system can create a character who can function in all the various worlds of modern fiction, but that is too great a field to cover. So it is up to the referee to design scenarios using the fiction or fact as desired. To facilitate this the designer, Mike Stackpole, provides an extensive reading list of both fact and fiction. Television programmes, like **The Sweeney** and **The Professionals** also provide excellent material. So what if the game leaves referees on their own; we are all big boys and girls now.

*Just how much should a game system leave up to the referee? I've always believed that the oft-seen phrase 'it is up to the referee to decide how this may be done' is a cop out. It is **always** up to the referee what happens in a game, from the way characters are generated onwards. Why have any rules at all? You should be able to start playing the game from page one, and you should be able to complete a game with the information provided. Referees should be making choices from information provided, not working from scratch.*

*At this late stage, there is very little that we here at the Mill want to add to the debate about 'the Devil in D&D'; readers might be interested, however, in hearing just what one **IMAGINE** reader had to say.*

Andrew Rilston, Brighton, Sussex: I'm sure this is not the first letter you have received about the 'Child's Play For Satan' article in the **Guardian**. I'm afraid Don Turnbull may have missed the point of the allegations. I do not think that anyone was suggesting that the **D&D®** game made children into Devil Worshippers rather it was said that illustrations of demons were intrinsically dangerous because the powers they represent were real.

Now, everyone is entitled to their religious

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views. I am a Christian and believe in the Devil (although I rather doubt that pictures in the **Monster Manual** are much use to him). Out of respect to people's convictions and in the interests of good taste, would it not be sensible to remove all references to demons and devils from the rules and to print a disclaimer in future editions along the lines of 'magic as represented in this fantasy game should in no way be confused with the real occult'?

*The **real** occult? I suppose that phrase more than any other illuminates the gap in understanding between those who play fantasy role-playing games and those who criticise them on religious grounds. Such a disclaimer would be unnecessary to a person who believes that there is no such thing as magic in any form, and that the presentation of it in a fantasy game in no way suggested the opposite, any more than the inclusion of vampires. If there is an error of judgement in the constitution of the game in this regard, it is that it borrows extensively from religions that non-players take very seriously in an entirely different context. I've never been in a campaign where demons or gods had any real part, so I wouldn't miss them if they were removed. What do others think?*

Onto a much happier note – the return of an old friend.

Victoria Kassner, London: Well, I certainly started something, didn't I (letters, #11)? On the whole, it was nice to get so much constructive sympathy, though I do understand Penny Davidson's 'nothing ventured, nothing gained' attitude. Then again, would she take an inexperienced, first level character into a dungeon alone? I wouldn't, and I'm sure there are a few **experienced** players out there who wouldn't either. On the other hand, Patricia Bond's suggestion about a 'novice meeting' is good. You might need some very kind-hearted and patient GM to run the thing, but at least the players will feel less nervous and/or foolish knowing that everyone else is in the same boat. And there's no rush to make decisions because you're holding up the regulars either!

On a personal note, I thought you might like to know that I've taken a small step forward. I've actually met someone else who plays the game — the new secretary at my office. We've discussed it, and she's going to set up a game for me to play in sometime.

Many thanks!

*You're very welcome. Interesting point about DMs and novices, and one which Derrick Norton covers on page 52 in his article on **Getting Started**. And speaking of Derrick, he might as well lead off the comments on #14:*

Derrick Norton, Nottingham: I would like to comment on Neil Gaiman's story **Featherquest**. As far as I was concerned, the moral suggested at the end lay in the fact that one shouldn't plough through such infantile attempts at humour in the hope of finding aesthetic stimulation.

That's what I get for listening to someone who writes for us. Let's try another opinion.

Marie Patterson: I've loved Bryan Talbot's stuff, ever since the old **Branestawm** comix (which must date me). And a Neil Gaiman story? I've only seen his non fiction so far, in the music press and the 'rude' press. He's a funny and sometimes brilliant writer.

*I suppose we had better come clean and admit that those were Marie's comments **before** she saw #14. We've had letters from other people about that issue, but they're from people we've heard from before.... come on people, let's have some new faces around here, or they'll cut this section down to just a page again.*

*Meanwhile, we'll finish with a few questions that I stole from the **Dispel Confusion** mob, and a final, disgruntled complaint.*

K. Morris, Doncaster: Could we now see articles on setting up a campaign, including NPCs armies, cities, etc?

And in the scenario **Thunder Crag** it says there are two maps, one showing both levels of the workings, the other showing the Conjuration Chamber. Where is the map detailing the conjuration chamber? Has it been subject to an **invisibility** spell?

Tim Farlam, Groes, nr Denbigh, Wales: Do you think that we could have more competitions like the **Philospher's Stone**, and special issues like the druid special in #5? Is it possible that we could have a colour poster of the cover in the centre of the magazine, because some issues have such spectacular covers (eg #s 9 and 12)?

Jeremy Nuttall, Congleton, Cheshire: Hate Rubic — he's just a waste of space. Couldn't you try to get someone like Ian Gibbs (of **VOP** fame) to do something?

M. Black, Bonnyrigg, Scotland: I realize that the **AD&D Playfigures** from Matchbox may encourage younger people to start role-playing, but I think they degrade the game to being a toy soldier bloodbath.

*Actually, properly used they can be very good visual aids. Try heating them up over a gas ring, and then show your players just what the Bad Guy's fireball did to their **plate mail +5**....*

As to the questions, the answers are:

*Yes, not only will there be the development of **Pelinore** as a campaign setting, but we will also be publishing features for those who want to go their own way, including the return of Katino and the **Private Lives of NPCs**;*

*Curses, we ran out of room for the map.... I think **feeblemind** was the spell that got us here;*

Yes, the Celts return, next issue (see below), and that's not the last of our plans;

No, we couldn't afford to publish posters that way, but we've still designs on publishing an art book one day;

*and Yes, why not Ian himself (and we've kept **Rubic** too!).*

Letters edited by Paul Cockburn

Next Issue

THE CELTS ARE BACK!

The wild warriors of the islands return, in a new adventure for the AD&D® game (levels 3rd-5th) — TIR NAN OG.

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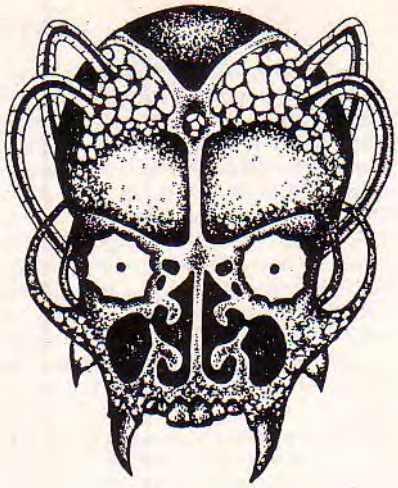
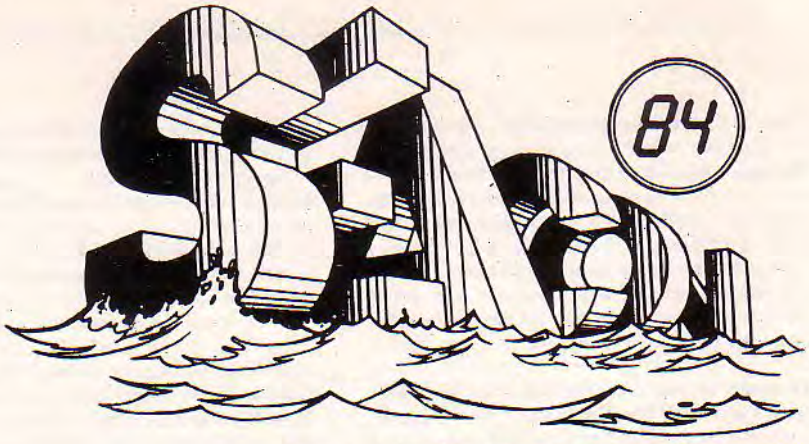


Rebecca



A report on the Science Fiction Convention held at the Brighton Metropole April 20-23

by Pete Tamlyn

The first thing that any of the organisers will tell you about Seacon is that it was not one convention, but three.

As well as being the annual British Science Fiction Eastercon it was the venues for the 1984 European SF convention (Eurocon) and also a meeting of the World SF organisation. What this meant in practice was that the attendance numbered almost 2,000 people from 21 different countries, including a goodly number of well known authors, all of whom got together in Brighton on one of the sunniest Easter weekends for years. Sounds good, doesn't it?

But wait, what does one do at Science Fiction conventions? Never having been to one before myself, I wasn't quite sure, but I am happy to say that I was pleasantly surprised by the range of entertainment on offer. To start with there were three simultaneous programmes of speeches and panel discussion. These ranged from the serious literary (Brian Aldiss holding forth on his latest creation, the World of Helliconia) to the serious scientific (a talk on 'The search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence'), the nostalgic (a History of Dan Dare) and the entertaining (Harry Harrison on 'Humour in SF'). The programmes also included various official events such as speeches by the guests of honour, Roger Zelazny headlining, and the announcement of the 1984 British Science Fiction Association Awards.

In addition to the major events there were four specialist programmes. The fan room hosted 'fannish' events such as a beer tasting, a silly games competition and a fanzine auction. The games room had talks on **Traveller** (by Marcus Rowland) and writing computer adventures, as well as a selection of computer games freely available all day. The film programme alone made the Con worthwhile for many people as it included several recent releases (*Bladerunner; Dark Crystal; Superman III*), some favourites (both *Star Trek* films; *Creature from the Black Lagoon*) and a number of classically bad films. If you couldn't find your favourite film in that lot, well then it was probably on offer at some time in the video room.

All that, you might think, would be enough to keep anyone happy all weekend, but there were also several special events to go to. One hall contained a number of book and comic stalls and the Art Show at which you could see, and buy, anything from some good fan art to the originals of several book covers. The Masquerade on Saturday night was a truly spectacular event, one of the most impressive costumes being that worn by chief judge, Julian May, who also took part in a discussion panel on how to make such outfits. Capping it all was a rock concert on the Sunday with *Hawkwind* as headline band.

The famous authors in attendance were happy to talk to fans and sign autographs. Some, like Zelazny, were guests of Honour; others, like Julian May, were on a promotional tour; but some came simply because they enjoy conventions. Bob Shaw and Harry Harrison are apparently regular attendees at the Eastercon, and John Brunner was co-chairman of the organising committee. Not everyone who was invited could make it, but a quick word of thanks to Arthur C Clarke who took the trouble to phone the convention and wish it luck, and a small raspberry to Robert Heinlein who failed to turn up at the last minute leaving the organisers with a little egg on their faces.

Other than Marcus Rowland's talk on Traveller there were no official events concerned with role-playing. However, I did spot a couple of games of AD&D in progress and there were several people wandering around in t-shirts and badges that proclaimed their affinities to role-playing. Also in evidence were Dave Langford, David Pringle, Colin Greenland and Neil Gaiman, all of whom have contributed to IMAGINE™ magazine, and Esdevium Games had a stall in the book room.

Was it worth the money? I'll say so. Besides all the entertainment listed above, Kat and I got three nights in one of Brighton's poshest hotels, including TV, bathroom and breakfast, for less than twice what we paid to go to **GamesFair**. Mind you, this does remind me of one of the problems of Seacon. GamesFair is deliberately kept small and therefore friendly. With 2,000 people about, it can be difficult to find the people that you know let alone start making friends. Anyone with few friends amongst SF fans would have felt quite lost, and you might also have been unimpressed with some of the organisational errors had you been unaware that the whole thing was put together by amateurs doing it for fun, and for free, in their spare time.

If anyone is interested in getting into SF fandom there is a large selection of small conventions every year that should prove more friendly if less spectacular. A few examples of forthcoming events are **Albacon**, Glasgow in July starring Harlan Ellison; **Oxcon**, Oxford in August starring Brian Aldiss; and **Novacon**, Birmingham in November which fortuitously clashes with the postal gamers' convention, **Midcon**, allowing enthusiasts to sample both at very little extra cost. The next really huge convention won't be for a while yet as Eurocon and the World SF meeting move around a bit (next year they are in Riga, Russia) but British fans are currently bidding to hold a SF Worldcon in 1987 which, if it comes off, will make Seacon look like a small puddle. Let's hope they get it.

Full details of the conventions mentioned above:

Albacon — Central Hotel. Glasgow, 20-23 July. Registration £9.00, hotel price unknown. Write to 62 Campsie Road, Wishaw, ML2 7QG.

Oxcon — St Catherine's College, Oxford, 24-27 August. Registration £8.00, rooms £14.00 a night. 18 Norham Gardens, Oxford.

Novacon — Grand Hotel, Birmingham, 9-11 November. Registration £6.00, rooms £15.00 a night. 11 Fox Green Crescent, Acocks Green, Birmingham.

Anyone wishing to help the **Worldcon** bid should send £1.00 (deductable from your registration fee) to **Britain In '87**, 28 Duckett Road, London, N4 1BN.

Pete Tamlyn

Fantasy Media

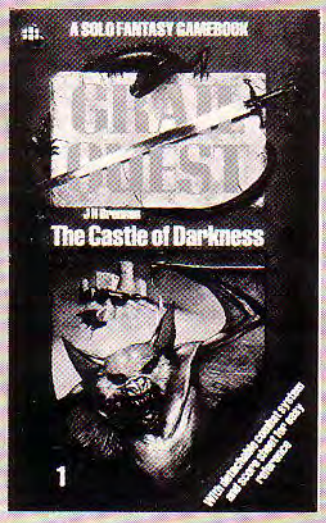
*Colin Greenland, author of **The Entropy Exhibition** and co-editor of SF magazine **Interzone**, reviews the latest additions to the fantasy/SF media.*

'I don't know,' said one critic as he left the cinema after **Greystoke** (Warner, PG), 'I rather miss the fight with the crocodile.' Subtitled 'The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes', it isn't just a remake in the line of *Flash Gordon* or *Superman* — Director Hugh Hudson has returned to the original novel, which Hollywood consistently neglected. He treats the story of the English Earl reared by apes with new sympathy and dignity, and with all the scenic grandeur and dramatic intensity a contemporary film can provide. So Christopher Lambert is not Johnny Weismuller; he's a sensitive, shrewd Tarzan with a sense of humour and a streak of vanity, who relishes the challenge of swapping the treetops for the strange and shiny trappings of English nobility, until the human tragedy becomes too much for him to bear. Even in the jungle, it's his lithe cunning that makes him Lord of the Apes, rather than supernatural muscles. In the overgrown treehouse where the boy was born, an ape who picks up a gun nearly blows his head off, but Tarzan swiftly realizes how to use the knife he finds, to kill food and enemies rather than himself.

Eric Langlois is extraordinary as the teenage Tarzan, bounding along branches with an altogether eerie nonchalance. At the same time, Hudson makes it clear that growing up with apes is *tough*. His Cameroons location (and its Elstree annexe) may be spectacular, but it's also mucky, bloody, hot and very dangerous. Full marks for the real apes, and for the actors who do such a phenomenal job of getting inside their skins. Fine characterization by Andie McDowell as a tender but determined Jane, by John Wells as Sir Evelyn Blount, the pompous patrician of Science and Society, and by Nigel Davenport as the bulldog Major Jack Downing who regards it as his missionary duty to blast away at the entire African ecology with both barrels.... 'Sport and blood, Sir Evelyn; stuff of life!'. Lord Greystoke, Tarzan's grandfather, a wonderful, wilful old man, was Ralph Richardson's final performance, and one of his greatest.

It's good work reviewing movies, because you get to see them free in the most luxurious cinemas — but it's hard having to make notes when you can't bear to look away from the screen for a moment. If there's a better film this year than **Greystoke** I shall be astonished. Watch this space.

In a lonely castle in a land where everyone but her has gone to sleep for the winter, a young princess hears a noise from the locked watchtower. Inside is a boy of an unknown race, shivering in thin grey clothes, but utterly silent and, as Khira discovers, the victim of a mysterious schizophrenia. He has no idea who he is or how he got there. She calls him **Darkchild** (Penguin, £1.95). When she discovers his real identity, then the trouble starts. Not only is Darkchild an unwelcome intruder in the rigid and unforgiving matriarchy of Brakrath, he may be a threat to the entire planet. Sydney J Van Sycoc's novel is the first of a trilogy, and follows Khira and Darkchild to an agonizing maturity. The characterization is acute, the violent fluctuations of adolescent emotion all the more poignant for the sheer difficulty of the friendship and the inflexible laws that determine Khira's conduct and future. Van Sycoc has constructed a wholly alien civilisation whose queens have to go forth and physically bring back the power of the sun each spring; human nature is interwoven with the life of the planet in a web we can scarcely understand. It's a grim and tearful story, and for all its imaginative conviction I found it hard going. Van Sycoc is rather too lavish with her characters' misery.



Another series of adventure books to while away time between real games... The *Grailquest Solo Fantasy Gamebook #1, Castle of Darkness*, by J H Brennan, available from bookshops, price £1.50.

The Forces of Krill, The Manifestro Quest and **The Cavern of Doom** (Puffin, £1.25 each) — these new adventure game books by Eric S Meretzky are clearly intended to extend the huge success of the Jackson and Livingstone Fighting Fantasies to a younger audience; Dick and Dora discover D&D. The idea, I suppose, is that you give them to your little sister or brother to keep them from pestering you while you're gaming. Unfortunately, they're lousy; crudely conceived, lazily written and atrociously illustrated. ' "It's.... it's a sword," gasped June. "An ancient sword of elvish workmanship," added Bill, "like the one in the story we read in class today!" ' Any child of any intelligence will swiftly realize they're being patronized, and will return to their own fantasies — and a good thing too.

'Imagination — it's got to have a practical side, a way of turning the dream into reality.' Thus Mark Hamill introduces **SPFX**, which is not another unpronounceable henchbeing of Darth Vader's, but a documentary about special effects and the 'teamwork required to put a dream on film'. The film is **The Empire Strikes Back**, and this CBS/Fox video is full of interesting glimpses behind the scenes where puppet-masters and model-makers can toil for eight weeks to produce a shot that lasts one second. Clips too from some of the classics of fantasy film effects, **The Thief of Baghdad**, **One Million Years BC**, **2001**, and from startlingly accomplished animated films made by American schoolchildren. My only complaint is that the video is a terrible muddle of everything tipped in together, in no intelligible order.

Also on video from CBS/Fox, **The Intruder** (18) is the story of a tall, dark stranger with a tall, dark coffin who arrives to put on a show in a small Canadian town. Who's in the coffin? Howard Turt. Who? Well, if you want to see him you have to wish very hard.... all together now — 'Open the box!' 'Stake the mummy!' Decorated with soap-opera sex and squabbles, and burdened with dialogue of supernatural stupidity, **The Intruder** fails to thrill.

If you prefer your strangers messianic, try **The Next One** (Filmtown, 15), in which an astronaut's widow finds one such washed up on the beach of her Greek island retreat. Glen (Keir Dullea), the castaway in space and time, has no memory and no identification, except for a number marked on his shoulder, but when Mrs Johnson (Adrienne Barbeau) shows him the crucifix in the village church, he muses, 'I think I've seen his face before.' Discovering uncanny powers in himself, he embarks on his own career of miracles. Will he be the Next One to be crucified? An awkward movie, but a thoughtful attempt to connect ancient and modern mythology.

Colin Greenland

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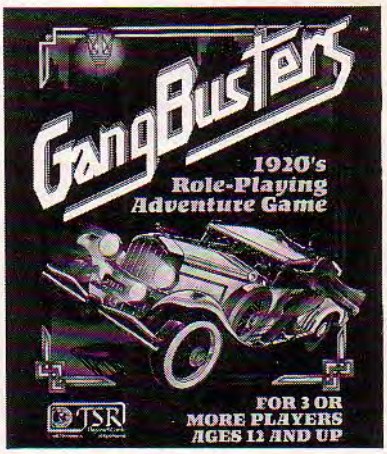

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Table-top wargamers do everything to scale; you can recognize them by the metal tape measure discreetly protruding from their breast pockets.

A page for the not-so-experienced adventurer

by Roger Musson

You may have wondered occasionally why in part of the rulebooks for the D&D® game, distances are given in inches when evidently they are really in tens of feet. Why not give the actual distance instead of using scale in this way?

The reason has to do with the history of the game. In its earliest stages, it grew out of the **Chainmail** game system which was a set of rules for fighting quasi-medieval/fantasy battles as table-top wargames using miniature figures. Now, table top wargamers are folk who do everything to scale. You can always recognize them by the metal tape measure discreetly protruding from their breast pockets. If the rule system states the range of a 16-pounder cannon, it will state the range as so many inches, and the wargamer will pull out his tape measure, and measure the distance between his cannon and the infantry unit he wants to shoot at to see whether it is in range.

The original intention was that the D&D® game should be played in a similar fashion. You have your painted metal figures and your table-top, and if your fighter has a 'move' of 9" per turn, why, then, every so often you pull out your tape measure, measure off 9" in the direction you want to go, and move your figure to its new location. Similarly, if you wish to cast *Frisby's Flying Fingers* or some such spell, and the range of it is 10", you measure the range to the target in much the same way as the classical table-top wargamer measures the range of his cannon.

That said, I have never actually encountered anyone playing the D&D game in that way. If originally the intention of the game was to provide a setting for table-top hand-to-hand combats, the setting rapidly took over and the emphasis became one of the fantasy milieu rather than of individual combat. There are, in fact, four different ways of setting out a game, and it might be useful to look briefly at each in turn.

The first, of course, is the method I have just outlined; using metal figures of the correct scale, and measuring all movement, fire combat, spell casting etc with a tape measure to ensure absolute accuracy. This is a very precise way of doing things, and because all distances are measured it reduces if not eliminates a lot of wrangling along the lines of 'I should have worked my way round to strike from behind by now' — 'Oh, no, you don't close till next melee round'... and so on.

The second style, and as far as I can see, the commonest, is to use painted figures, but make no pretence at exact scale. So the players use their figures on the table most of the time merely to indicate marching order. In combat, the position of the figures will show who is attacking whom, and give a fairly accurate picture of where everybody is standing, but not exactly. If one or more characters are moving, the DM will say 'you get to about here this round', indicating a spot, rather than measuring the distance precisely. Although this is less exact and depends a bit more on the judgement of the DM, doing things this way is less formal, less trouble, and quicker.

The third system is to forego the painted metal figures altogether, and use cardboard counters instead. This has a number of advantages. Counters are a lot cheaper, require very little time to prepare as against the hours one spends painting up figures, and are very light compared to the great weight of humping a big figures-collection around with you. Also, if you find yourself wanting to summon 20 orcs all of a sudden, 20 orc figures is quite an order, whereas 20 counters with *orc* written on them can be produced without any difficulty. The disadvantage, of course, is that counters do not look as attractive as well-painted figures, and having an attractive figure to represent your favourite character can make him or her more alive than a scrap of cardboard ½" square.

If one is using counters, it is common to use a hexagonal grid to put them on, as in a conventional board wargame. This is useful for regulating movement in a similar fashion to the exact scale approach — one can work out each character's movement or weapon range in terms of hexes instead of inches. In fact, it is rather easier to count the hexes than to haul out a tape measure, so one can if one likes combine painted figures and a hex-sheet to control movement, and this works quite well. Blank hex-sheets and counters can be obtained from most hobby shops.

The fourth system is to dispense with markers altogether, and simply rely on everyone having a good image of what is going on. This has the advantage of minimising equipment — useful if you want to play sitting out on the lawn. But it is the hardest to do successfully, and cannot be recommended to the beginner. Also, it is not really suitable for use with large groups. But with a small party, say four or five characters, and experienced players, one can get away quite well without using figures of any sort. It is important that the DM should be very careful, and not make assumptions about players' actions. Whenever anything important is about to happen, the DM should ask each player to state exactly what his or her character is doing and where they are standing, before springing a trap or a monster. Also, the DM should conduct similar interrogations at odd intervals at random, or the players will learn that detailed questions mean an impending trap. One useful device is occasionally to produce a rough sketch of a room and ask players to mark in their characters' positions — one can even keep track of a melee this way.

As in so many things, there is no right or wrong way to go about organising play. The important thing is to be aware of the alternatives and to find a style that suits you and your players.

Roger Musson

Roger has had work published in ***White Dwarf, The Wargamer, Wargame News*** *– and, of course, this regular feature in* ***IMAGINE*** *magazine. In future issues he will run a series of articles explaining board wargaming on a general level, for the benefit of role-players who are unfamiliar with this field.*

DISPEL CONFUSION

Role-playing games have complex rules that are open to interpretation – which can cause problems when two players interpret them differently. ***Dispel Confusion*** *is a column intended to help by providing answers to rules questions.*

At present we mainly answer questions about TSR games. While the answers we give are not fully 'official', we do have contact with the designers and a good deal of playing and refereeing experience.

An answer column needs questions, so send yours to:
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If you don't want to wait for your question to appear in the magazine, please enclose an SSAE.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® and ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® games

Q. Can a spell-using dragon have a familiar? *(Advanced)*

A. Dragon spells, although identical in effect to magic-user spells, are not acquired in the same way. Most dragons acquire spells as they grow older — the exact spells are determined randomly by the DM (gold dragons may actually have spell books). In no case does a dragon need material components to cast a spell.

Despite these differences, we can see no reason why a dragon should not have a familiar. **Find familiar** is not a very 'logical' spell for a dragon to know, because of its limited utility in everyday life, but if it is one of the spells the dragon knows, then it ought to be able to cast it, and obtain a familiar.

We also tend to think that a dragon's familiar should be out of the ordinary — after all, a toad is not going to last long in the company of a red dragon — and we find it difficult to take some possible familiars seriously (a green dragon with a weasel?!). We suggest that a dragon would automatically have a special familiar, as appropriate to its alignment (see the **Players Handbook** p66).

Q. Can a **magic missile** spell hit a specific part of a creature or object, ie a hand or an eye? *(Advanced)*

A. No. A **magic missile** may only be targeted at a single creature within an area of 10 square feet. Multiple missiles may be aimed at the same creature, or at different ones within the target area. Like any other form of attack, a magic missile cannot be aimed at a specific part of a creature — the **AD&D®** game has no critical hit system or separate hit point allocations (in the manner of **RuneQuest**, for example).

Finally, **magic missiles** may not be used against inanimate objects, eg door locks.

Q. Can a 3rd level magic user choose three 1st level spells instead of the two 1st and one 2nd level spells that he or she is entitled to? *(Basic & Advanced)*

A. No. Spell casting characters are entitled to precisely the number and level of spells that are listed on the appropriate table for their class and level. Spell levels cannot be 'traded'. For example, a 5th level spell does not equal two 2nd level plus one 1st level, although that 'spell mix' might be more useful to the mage in question.

The exception to that rule (there's always one) is in the case of Cantrips in the Advanced game. These zero-th level spells can be traded on a four-for-one basis with 1st level magic user or illusionist spells.

Q. How much money does a multi-classed character get when created? *(Advanced)*

A. A multi-classed character is entitled to the combined total starting cash for all of his or her classes!

Q. What kind of attack do piercers have after they land, and what is the damage for the succeeding rounds after the first successful attack? *(Advanced)*

A. Their sole mode of attack is dropping on a victim — and if they miss, they don't eat. After it has dropped a piercer will not cause any further damage.

Q. What happens after a door held by a **hold portal** spell is subsequently opened by some creature or a **knock** spell? Will it be held again? *(Basic)*

A. Any creature of three or more hit dice greater than the caster of the **hold portal** spell may break open a held portal in one round, or it may be opened with a **knock** spell. In either case, the portal will relock if allowed to close within the duration of the spell. Of course, if the door is destroyed the spell is useless.

Q. Is there a verbal component for clerical turning? *(Advanced)*

A. No, there is no verbal component to the act of a cleric turning the undead. It is even possible to turn creatures within the area of effect of a **silence, 15' radius** spell.

Mike Brunton, Graeme Morris, Phil Gallagher & Jim Bambra.

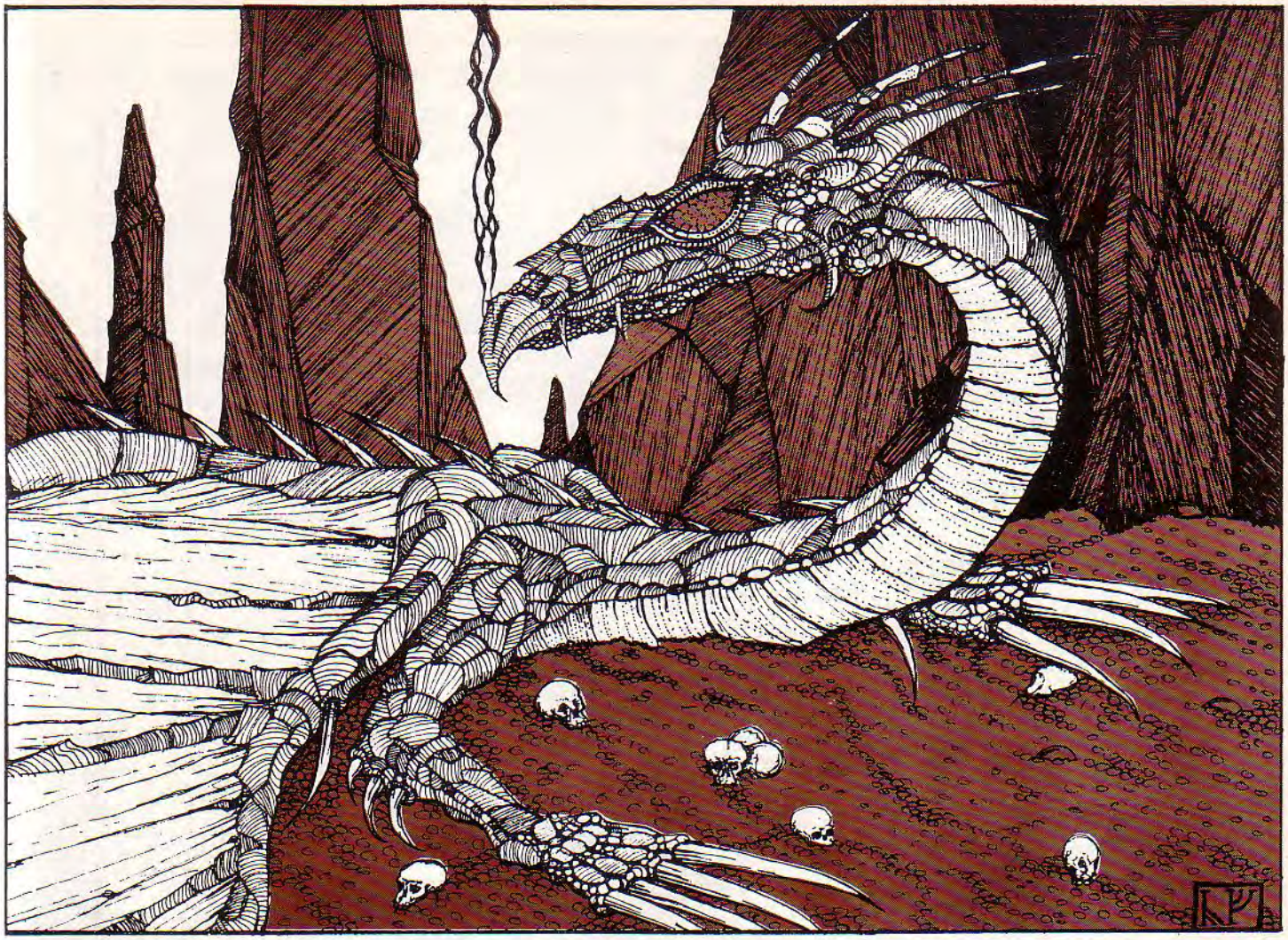
Getting Started

Some advice for newcomers to roleplaying from **Derrick C Norton**

It is a Tuesday evening on a college campus somewhere in England. A group of students are making their way over to a small hall, talking about 'orcs' and 'dragons', 'dungeons' and 'elves'. Overhearing their conversation, and not quite understanding all of it, is Tanith. Her interest has been sparked — she is a firm fan of Tolkien, and the conversation suggested that the group ahead of her might be too. As they disappear up the stairs, Tanith stops to ask the porter who has booked the hall. 'The Wargamers Society', he replies. Disappointed, Tanith leaves the hall.

One week later, Tanith and her boyfriend, Leigh, are sitting in that small hall, she being determined to see if her first impressions were at all right. In another corner, seven individuals argue, laugh and shout. After 30 minutes or so, the two 'fish' are reeled in — Tanith walks towards the boisterous throng. The group of players respond to their questions, and try to explain, but it is not long until one of them asks 'Look, would you like to play?...'

The continued expansion of FRP games to the general public, (as opposed to SF&F fanatics and traditional wargamers), has had the effect of increasing the number of new players involved in gaming, both players and referees alike. Perhaps you, reading this page, were recently 'hooked' in a way similar to Tanith, and now find yourself playing this new game, and perhaps even introducing others to it. It is becoming increasingly likely that new-



comers will be introduced to role-playing games by relative novices, and that this might be causing instances where some people get a very limited view of the whole business. Perhaps some of the more lurid recent publicity for the **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®** game was caused by this.

Of course, everyone must begin somewhere, and many new players will cope effectively with the complexities and possibilities of role-gaming rules. However, the subjective nature of role-playing literature can give rise to misunderstandings, or even neglect. Just as there are bad players, so there are bad referees, and what the newcomer to the hobby can fail to realise is the existence of both, and there are no easy criteria by which to judge the merits of a fellow player or referee anyway. Thus a newcomer to FRP, in all innocence, can be open to 'corruption' — that is, the adopted style of play will resemble that of fellow players, producing habits that might prove hard to drop. Unless the new player realises that role-playing games can be played in a variety of different ways, with totally different results, he or she might end up with a false perception of FRPs, built up from the very first meeting with the other players.

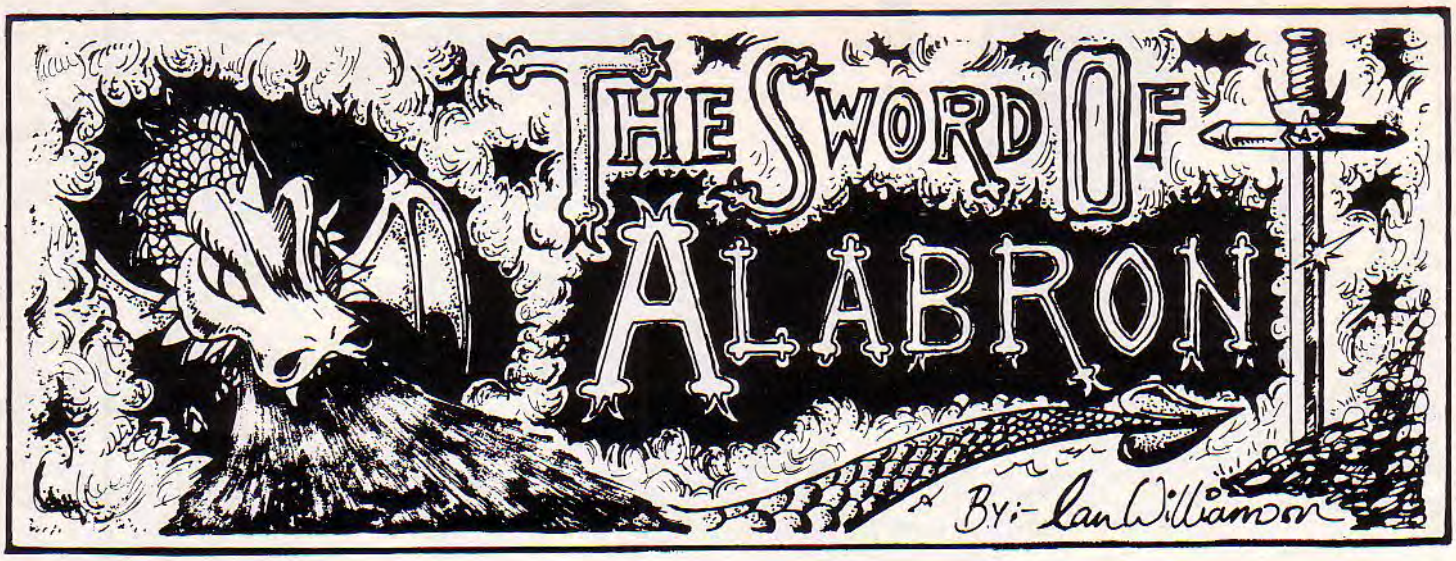
In Tanith's case, she had fallen in with players who were enthusiastic about new recruits. However, novice players should not be surprised if they are not immediately invited to join a game. Creating the first character and explaining the basic rules can take a long time. If this is in short supply, it is not unreasonable for the referee to invite the prospective player to watch a session, and then arrange another time to go over the basics. Even where novices have some role-playing experience, they should be aware that in games with characters of high experience/training the degree to which they can get involved is limited compared to the possibilities in a 'low level' scenario. Furthermore, early experience of 'high-level' play can give an unrepresentative view of the game. In the most popular FRP, the **DUNGEON & DRAGONS®** game, high-level characters have a much wider choice of actions available to them to deal with particular situations. The novice should not expect a first level character to be equally effective.

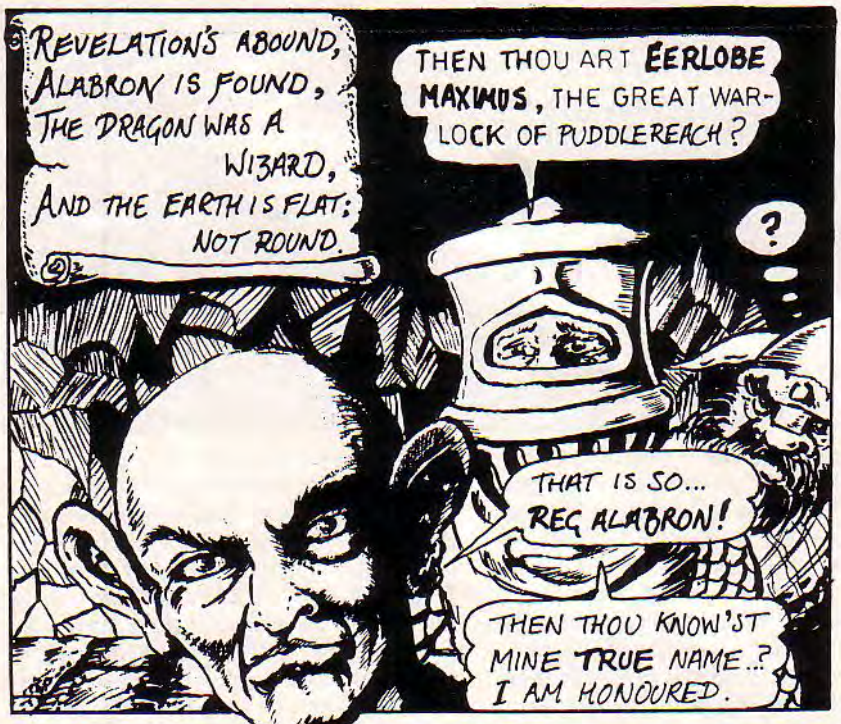
Thus, unfortunately, a novice may face something far removed from enthusiasm when trying to join an existing group. The reaction can range from resigned acceptance ('well.... you *can* play.... but....') to outright refusal in more blunt terms. Whatever the case, novices should not be conned into believing that their presence is going to disrupt the game for both players and referee, as if they were asking to join an ice-hockey team without being able to skate. Any competent referee will be able to produce a viable NPC for the novice to take over while the players outline the present situation. And what if the novice's character does then say something inappropriate to some 'Divine Being'? It all adds to the fun!

Again, once accepted into the group, novices should not be misled into thinking that everyone else has their interest at heart. Some players will quickly use their 'authority by experience' to ill-effect. Thus, instead of friendly advice, the novice can be subjected to a stream of exasperated, incomprehensible comments; either that or a continual verbal attrition, with sarcastic remarks relating to the novice's cognitive powers. It can be very disturbing to realise that the butt of another player's ire is not your weak and hare-brained character, but you yourself, for not utilising some special ability of which you were not aware. If this is the sort of game you find yourself in, it probably isn't worth staying with. Likewise, the game where other players refuse to explain things in simple, everyday language, but persist in the (quite unnecessary) use of quasi-mystical jargon is probably another bad example to follow.

As with any hobby, these kinds of players see themselves as the dedicated few, who wish the pastime to remain small and select. They are better left to their own insular and cynical cliques while you find some better company. Don't be put off by the arguments of the kind of players who were against the recent move of the gaming magazines into large retail chains. It isn't going to be half as awful as they think if more people actually come to understand just what this kind of gaming is all about.

Derrick C Norton


THE SWORD OF ALABRON
By:- Ian Williamson

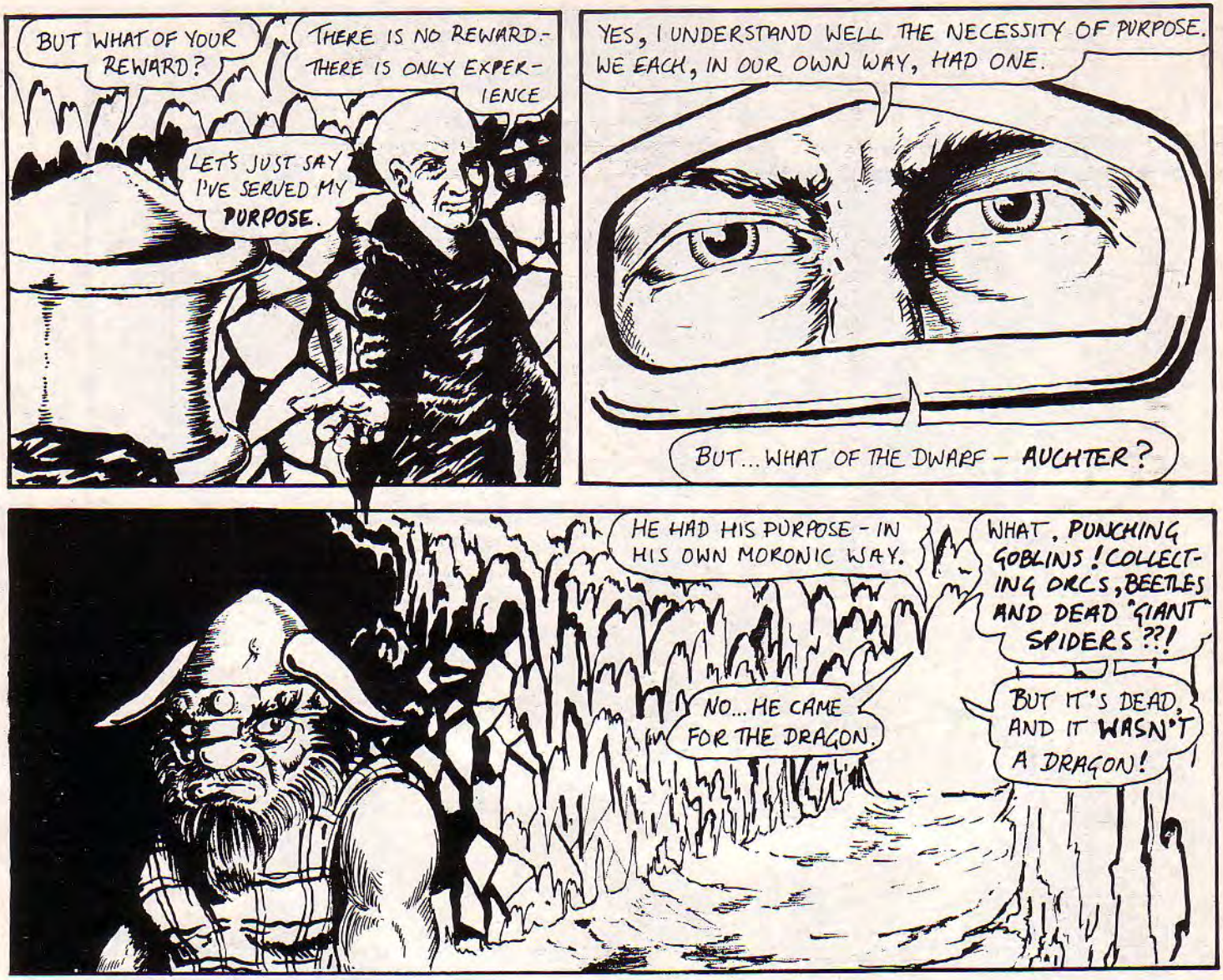

REVELATIONS ABOUND, ALABRON IS FOUND, THE DRAGON WAS A WIZARD, AND THE EARTH IS FLAT: NOT ROUND.
THEN THOU ART EERLOBE MAXIMUS, THE GREAT WARLOCK OF PUDDLEREACH?
?
THAT IS SO... REG ALABRON!
THEN THOU KNOW'ST MINE TRUE NAME..? I AM HONOURED.

DRAGON DUNG! IF YOU WERE A WARLOCK, WHY DIDN'T YOU CAST ANY SPELLS?
NOW THAT WOULD BE TELLING.
?

ER.. UM... THIS OCCASIONALLY HAPPENS.. THERE ARE..ER... MANY MYSTERIES ABOUT ME...
MAY I THEN TAKE THE SWORD?
DAMNED ENLARGE SPELL!

NO!
WHY NOT THIEF?
WE'LL SPLIT IT— 25-25-25-25.
YOU JEST!?
YOU WILL SPLIT NOTHING, MORGRUND.

MORGRUND?
NO... NOT ME NIGHT-SWIFT... YOU GOT THE WRONG BLOKE.
I SENSED IT LONG AGO – ASSASSIN!
GIVE US A BREAK. IT WAS MY FIRST EVER JOB.!
OH WELL-THAT'S LIFE!
IF THIS IS SO, I SHALL PROD THE BLOOD FROM HIS SCHEMING BONES.
COME ON REG OLD PAL, BUDDY? YOU'RE LAWFUL GOOD - I WONT DEFEND MYSELF - HONEST!
OH... FIDDLESTICKS!
I'LL TRADE YOUR 25% OF THE SWORD FOR SPARING YOUR LIFE...
ANYTHING YOU SAY.
... AND YOU MUST GIVE TO THE NEEDY EVERY DAY!
BUT I'M NEEDY!!
NOW WHAT WILL YOU TRADE?
OH! YOU CAN HAVE THE SWORD.- JUST TELEPORT ME BACK, THAT'LL DO.
'TWILL TELEPORT? GOSH!
BET HE WONT TAKE ME..
IT HAS THE POWER...


BUT WHAT OF YOUR REWARD?
THERE IS NO REWARD - THERE IS ONLY EXPERIENCE
LET'S JUST SAY I'VE SERVED MY PURPOSE.
YES, I UNDERSTAND WELL THE NECESSITY OF PURPOSE. WE EACH, IN OUR OWN WAY, HAD ONE.
BUT... WHAT OF THE DWARF – AUCHTER?
HE HAD HIS PURPOSE - IN HIS OWN MORONIC WAY.
WHAT, PUNCHING GOBLINS! COLLECTING ORCS, BEETLES AND DEAD "GIANT" SPIDERS??!
NO... HE CAME FOR THE DRAGON.
BUT IT'S DEAD, AND IT WASN'T A DRAGON!
NO - I MEAN THE RED ONE.
OH. WELL AT LEAST WE WONT SEE HIM AGAIN..
...I SINCERELY HOPE NOT!
FIN.
AND SO ENDS THE QUEST FOR THE SWORD OF ALABRON AS WAS TOLD TO ME BY THE GREAT SAGE "PAXO," ONE LUNCHTIME IN THIS VERY TAVERN - NOT THAT I BELIEVED A WORD OF IT!
Ian Williamson '84

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